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Contrasting the Cases of Two Cities in Canada

Understanding the Factors in Building Confidence in University–City Government Collaborations

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Contrasting the Cases of Two Cities in Canada:
Understanding the Factors in Building Confidence in
University–City Government Collaborations

Joanne Elizabeth Curry

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration
(Higher Education Management)

University of Bath
School of Management

May, 2015

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Abstract

As city governments and universities expand their roles in economic development, an opportunity is created to transform a university–city relationship from an operational one to a strategic one and from co-existence to collaboration. Impacted by history and context, there are many challenges to overcome.

The goal of my thesis was to understand the “doing of collaboration” and the specific management processes in university–local government collaborations. I conducted a comparative case study of a Canadian University, Simon Fraser University and two city governments, Burnaby and Surrey.

A number of management processes are critical in building a successful collaboration. Two of the most important are the use of one or more liaison people with the appropriate skills, mandate and access to resources and the involvement of representatives at different organizational levels, particularly faculty who provide access to the university's research capacity. Bilateral city–university committees and a good relationship between the university president and city mayor are useful but not sufficient to deepen the collaboration. The involvement of third-party organizations in the university–city relationship is beneficial. The importance of trust-building processes such as attribution and dispute resolution are heightened if there is a need to overcome a negative historical incident, an isolated geographic location, or tensions over transactional issues.

While management processes are important, a shared strategic goal is paramount. This shared goal may not be evident at the start of a relationship. To identify the shared goal, it is necessary to have an understanding of the most valued university roles given the city's context and aims. Each organization must have sufficient trust to enter into a deeper collaboration and an initial condition of openness, responsiveness, and commitment is necessary. The thesis provides practical advice to cities and universities and reveals how demonstration of value can build over increasingly ambitious projects.

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter sets out the university administrative roles that led to my interest in the topic and summarizes the knowledge I gained from assignments and reflection on practice in the University of Bath Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) program and activities to determine current practices. After identifying my research questions, I outline the structure of this document.

1.1 University Roles and Interest in Topic

I have spent over twenty years at Simon Fraser University (SFU), a large, multi-campus research university located in British Columbia (BC), Canada. From the vantage point of administrative positions in five departments, I have initiated and nurtured collaborations between the university and private, government, and community organizations. The purpose of these collaborations has varied from conducting research and exchanging knowledge (as executive director of a national research network of centres of excellence in e-learning), to commercializing university technologies through licenses and new company creation (as director of a university–industry liaison office), to leading the development of SFU Surrey, a new urban campus with a mission of supporting the economic development of its host city and region (as founding executive director of the campus). I gained an appreciation of the potential of interorganizational collaborations to fulfil the university’s objectives of community engagement and economic and social development. I also came to appreciate the difficulty of developing relationships between universities and industry, local governments, and community organizations. I agree with Huxham (2003, pp. 420–421) that "making collaboration work effectively is highly resource consuming and often painful. . . . [D]on’t do it unless you have to." I would also agree with Harkavy (2000, p. 3) that “[t]o make the case for university/community partnerships is easy to do. The hard thing is to figure out how to do it. The hardest part of all, of course, is to actually get it done.”

From 2010 to 2012, I was the lead coordinator for an extensive internal and external consultation process called “envision>SFU”. Initiated by a new president at the start of his term at SFU, the process was designed to assess SFU’s strengths and identify areas of differentiation to determine how the university could best position itself in BC’s post-secondary sector. The consultations took place over a ten-month period in 2011. The external consultation included meetings with business and industry groups, arts organizations, aboriginal peoples, multicultural organizations, and the mayors and councils of eight BC local governments. The resulting vision and mission, to become Canada’s most community-engaged research university, was announced in February of 2012. The vision seeks to distinguish SFU as “the leading engaged university defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement” (SFU strategic vision, 2012). Specific goals are articulated for engaging students, engaging research, and engaging communities. Subsequently, in my current position as associate vice-president of external relations, I was given the mandate to develop an institutional community engagement strategy, completed in April of 2013. I currently have an operational role in implementing SFU’s community engagement strategy and facilitating the university’s relationship with local governments.

The role that had the greatest influence on my selection of this thesis topic was that of founding executive director of SFU Surrey. The City of Surrey–SFU Surrey collaboration, in existence for 13 years, is believed to have yielded positive results for the City of Surrey in a number of areas including branding and place-making (attracting new real-estate development and spawning new economic development initiatives). The collaboration has also created project and funding opportunities for students and faculty. The perceived success of the City of Surrey–SFU relationship is often contrasted with the university’s relationship with the City of Burnaby, the host city of SFU’s original campus, which houses the majority of students, faculty, staff, and facilities. This long-term relationship is not seen as close or successful by the university’s administration despite the positive impact SFU Burnaby has had on the City of Burnaby over the past five decades.

1.2 Research and Reflection on Practice in the Bath DBA Program

The experience described in the previous section encouraged me to seek a greater understanding of university and community relationships for regional economic development throughout my studies in the University of Bath DBA program.

1.2.1 Expanding university roles in regional economic development.

Though a literature review and paper (Curry, 2010), I gained an understanding of the range of roles a university can play in supporting regional economic development in addition to the university's fundamental contributions as a major employer, purchaser of goods and services, creator of graduates as inputs to regional labour markets, and contributor of knowledge through basic and applied research (Goddard & Vallance, 2013). Table 1 summarizes the various university roles and benefits thereof identified in the literature review and subsequent research for this thesis.

Table 1: University Roles and Benefits to Economic Development

Role	Examples	University Benefits
Generate and attract talent	Providing a steady supply of skilled graduates; acting as a regional talent magnet by increasing attractiveness of region to entrepreneurs, engineers, and scientists	University mission of teaching is enhanced through contact with employers and alumni
Commercialize knowledge and technologies	Spin-off companies, company accelerators or incubators, licensing of technology	Revenue stream for university; placement opportunity for graduates and co-operative education students
Provide formal and informal technical support and specialized expertise and facilities for R&D	Fee-for-service arrangements, less formal consulting, joint ventures Continuing studies and training courses	University revenue stream from government programmes and consulting and applied research projects; new ideas for research and teaching

Role	Examples	University Benefits
Provide education and training for industry and government	Continuing education and advanced training programmes, both generic and specialized	Additional revenue stream; when university faculty act as instructors, connection to industry needs can inform teaching and research
Act as a conduit to knowledge from global pipelines of international research networks	Public lectures on worldwide trends and issues, visiting international scholars, international graduate students	Adaptation of globally developed knowledge or technology to local context can result in new research and innovations
Apply research to a region that is used as a test bed or laboratory for research	Research partnerships and projects with regional companies, government, or organizations	Research enhanced by industrial applications and funding partnerships; may provide the university with a competitive advantage both nationally and internationally if distinct test bed
Support knowledge exchange among networks of firms	University workshops, angel forums, advisory councils, research projects with multiple partners	Brings university intelligence of issues and potential teaching and research opportunities; community support for university funding
Support regional decision-making	Information and analysis through papers and reports; participation on external boards and bodies; brokerage of partnerships and provision of networking opportunities	Brings university intelligence of issues and potential teaching and research opportunities; community support for university funding
Serve as anchor for industry cluster and help city brand	Seed a new industry cluster through a specialized research or teaching program; help to rebrand a city through the prestige of a research institution	Possible revenue streams; community support for university funding
Provide access to cultural and recreation facilities	Access to specialized theatre and sports facilities and university performances and events to enhance cultural life of community	Possible revenue streams; community support for university funding

Role	Examples	University Benefits
Develop social networks and encourage a culture of change, innovation, and trust	Provide new venues for community members to meet and exchange ideas and allow a neutral platform for exploration of issues	Community support for university funding

Sources: Power and Malmberg, 2008; Walshok, 1997; Thanki, 1999

Many universities are assuming an expanded role in regional economic development (Benneworth, 2010; Charles & Benneworth, 2001). Several authors highlight a new breed of universities that fully embrace this role (Bramwell & Wolfe, 2008; Etzkowitz *et al.*, 2000; Tornatzky *et al.*, 2002). Other authors promote the vision of a renewed civic university that forms its identity in the global academic community through its city or region (Goddard, 2009 as cited in Goddard & Vallance, 2013). While this has occurred throughout history with many well-known university towns in Europe and the US, efforts to publicize this role may reflect attempts by public universities to gain the support of government by demonstrating their institutions' relevance and impact. The pursuit of other revenue sources or "third stream" funding (Shattock, 2003) is another reason. Higher education policies in most countries do not include an explicit regional dimension with related funding support. In some countries, municipalities and city councils partially fill the funding gap (Goddard & Puukka, 2008). These small amounts of funding can have a steering influence, especially when traditional revenue sources are in decline.

In parallel with universities' interest in expanding roles in regional economic development, regions and cities have become more active participants in the knowledge economy. Cities are aware that knowledge industries are more likely to choose to be located in cities where clusters of related firms and university and research institutions create a critical mass. Reichert (2006) describes the rise of the proactive knowledge region and sees city-regions as becoming the main drivers of a major part of the economy: the knowledge economy.

A number of researchers have explored the factors that influence the types of roles a university can play in regional economic development. The characteristics of the city or region, including whether it is central or peripheral (Davies, 1998), the nature of the regional industry base, political and economic conditions, the complementarity of

fields between a university and its region, and the history of university–region linkages (Gunasekara, 2004) are important factors.

Some researchers feel the role of universities in economic development is overstated (Betts & Lee, 2004). There are also dangers that can occur when universities expand their roles in regional economic development. Some authors (Goddard & Puukka, 2008, p. 17) assert that the credibility and legitimacy of the institution are negatively influenced by moving away from the university as a “detached site for critical inquiry”. The university’s reputation can be harmed if the institution is not seen as responsive and is unable to meet rising expectations. External organizations assume that universities are relatively wealthy and in a position to respond to these demands (Davies, 1998). Other authors point out the potential for goal displacement or undermining of core university strengths, especially with further reductions in public expenditures (Abreu *et al.*, 2009). Harloe and Perry (2005, p. 36) highlight the burden on individual academics who “must convert the institutional rhetoric of engagement into reality”. University staff and faculty encounter many institutional barriers, as few universities have undertaken the internal transformations necessary to be responsive to these external community opportunities (Goddard & Puukka, 2008; Harloe & Perry, 2005). Gunasekara (2006) points to the institutional, policy, and individual identity challenges of academic staff and managers, which include: 1) seeing the link between their work and the institutional mission; 2) the lack of coordination within universities to pursue regional engagement; and 3) the disconnect with policies, including internal promotion policies. The internal promotion policies can have a major impact on research faculty if regional engagement does not lead to research publications and funding.

1.2.1 Understanding the factors leading to a positive university–local government relationship

I considered the role of SFU’s Surrey campus in regional economic development and obtained the perspectives of representatives of the City of Surrey on their decade-long relationship with the university (Curry, 2011). The research highlighted the importance of an explicit, central university role in economic development and outlined the many roles a university can play in this development. The findings also identified the benefits of a

shared vision and the effective use of management processes such as an assigned university liaison person.

The city representatives highly valued the university's contributions to city branding and place-making, including being a key partner in revitalizing the city centre by occupying buildings and adding a vibrant student population. They also identified two other roles that they considered important: the university's effort to bring together networks of organizations and the opportunity the collaboration creates to learn from the university (identified by Davies, 1998 and Reichert, 2006 as key roles). Despite a climate of increasing focus on accountability measures, the local government representatives viewed the City of Surrey–SFU Surrey partnership as an important outcome in itself. Percy *et al.* (2006) would agree, as they encourage universities to think about the relationship itself as the goal, placing the value on the community partner and not the completion of a project.

Mutuality—the two-way nature of the collaboration—was also a theme that arose in the interviews with local government representatives. Enos and Morton (2003) outline a continuum of “self-to-shared interest” along which partnerships move from a transactional partnership with distinct objectives to a transformational relationship. A transformational partnership is one in which partners are able to emphasize and accurately represent each other's interests. Interpersonal relationships are deepened and significant risks are taken as institutional relationships are tested, resulting in mutual learning. I believe that as universities move to expanded roles in developing regional economies with local governments, these relationships can evolve and become more transformational.

Other valued aspects of collaborations include openness and responsiveness, organizational culture (particularly an environment that supports taking risks), and communication (ease of contact, responsiveness, and flexibility).

This thesis provided me with an opportunity to further study the many aspects that contribute to university–city collaborations, an area of increasing interest to both cities and universities.

1.3 Research on Current Practices

In 2014, I had two opportunities to learn about the current approaches and practices of universities in connecting to local governments. I attended the Conference Board of Canada's day-long discussion of "Universities and their Host Cities". Participants included the vice-presidents and associate vice-presidents of twenty-four Canadian teaching and research universities. I also had an accepted presentation at the International Town–Gown Association (ITGA) conference in Clemson, South Carolina (Curry, 2014). The consensus at both meetings was that the university's relationship with its host city is of increasing importance not only to resolving "town and gown" issues related to university planning and operations but also to providing an avenue for pursuing new funding and economic development opportunities¹. The City representatives in attendance at the Canadian meeting affirmed the importance of the relationship with their universities. The mayor of Edmonton, a large Canadian city, spoke about the "sharpening realization of the city council that the fate of your city is tied to the success of its institutions" (D. Iveson, Mayor, pers. comm., 6 February, 2014).

Despite the growing importance of these relationships, university and city leaders acknowledged the challenges to achieving and maintaining a good relationship. In some cases, the university felt it was not appreciated and instead considered an inconvenience. The need of support from the top (mayor, president, city manager, and vice-presidents/other university staff) and a good relationship between the city mayor and university president with regular interchanges was highlighted. The commitment of staff, including a champion who can bring together a set of partners and define a project through a set of agreements, was also mentioned as a success factor.

For the US presentation, I conducted secondary research to determine current practices in managing collaborations between universities and local governments. Thirty-six cities and universities were identified through the membership list of the International Town–Gown Association (ITGA) and presenter lists of a series of conferences entitled "Best Practices in Building University/City Relations". All but two of the cities/universities were in the United

¹ A recent town–gown survey (Brailsford & Dunlavey, 2014) sponsored by the ITGA revealed that over 54% of university and city respondents surveyed were working collaboratively with their university or city counterparts on economic development projects.

States. I examined the websites of these cities and universities in order to identify liaison mechanisms (such as joint committees or assigned personnel) as well as mentions of the other partner. For each city, in addition to reviewing a list of official city committees, I often examined a recent annual State of the City address or economic development strategy to identify university involvement. I sought mention of departments, committees, structures, or personnel assigned to supporting local government–university relations, including interlocking strategic plans or cross-representation on committees. The challenge to identifying liaison mechanisms was the wide range of terminology used, from “town–gown” to “liaison”. The search involved only publicized information, and each university–city pair had a very different context, including the size of the town in comparison with the university population, how geographically central or peripheral the university was in relation to the city, and the history and the purpose of the collaboration.

Almost half of the university and/or city websites indicated a joint university–city government committee (18 out of 36).² Joint committees were established primarily to deal with issues such as safety and security and the quality of life in surrounding neighbourhoods. Only one official city committee was identified (City of Fredericton and University of Fredericton). Cities were more likely to have a cemetery committee than a university committee. There were also a few examples of official university committees (Bowling Green State University, Clemson University). In some cases, both universities located in a city had representatives who served on a city committee.

A number of websites indicated the existence of special-purpose, temporary committees for neighbourhood revitalization or capital projects. In one case, a task force was established to review and improve relationships (Purdue and West Lafayette Community). While only two cities had students/residents sections on their homepages (East Lansing, Tuscaloosa), one had a city manager’s advisory committee made up of students (the City of Boulder and the University of Colorado). Cross-memberships on committees were difficult to determine, as often committee members did not list an organizational affiliation. In one case, a city manager sat on a presidential search committee (Kent University), and

² A standing-room-only crowd at an organized session at the ITGA 2014 conference called “Town/Gown Advisory Boards 101” suggests that many more universities are considering such a committee.

in another, a city council member sat on a design advisory committee for a new stadium (Colorado State University). Often a government relations office lists a person responsible for liaising with all levels of government, including local government. Liaison people designated to manage city–university relationships are not common. A number of universities have “community liaison” staff. (Fort Collins and Colorado State University jointly fund a staff person.) With a growing interest in economic development, a number of cities and universities jointly participate in technology and business incubators as well as new consortiums or joint ventures for incubation of new companies.

Participation in the Canadian national discussion and the feedback received from presenting an overview of current practice at the US conference was helpful in reaffirming the growing importance of this topic, the desire to improve university-local government relationships, and the challenges in doing so. Universities and city governments are increasingly interested in collaborating but there is little understanding of the appropriate structures and processes to achieve a strong collaboration. Current practices are not based on any framework or best practice but have evolved to address issues or a specific opportunity. The importance of the presence or absence of strategic intent and trust, supported by open communication and relation-building, was reinforced.

1.4 Research Questions

The goal of my thesis is to understand how university–city government collaborations are developed and, specifically, how management and communication processes can support these collaborations. Given that the majority of interorganizational relationships fail (Das & Teng, 2000), there is a need to understand the management practices and techniques that facilitate the ongoing success of interorganizational relationships. My research is intended to build a greater understanding of these practices in order to support university–local government collaborations and to provide advice to the growing number of universities and cities in such relationships.

My focus is on the building of intentional, strategic, long-term, institutional collaborations as opposed to ad-hoc, short-term, departmental collaborations.³ As city governments and universities expand their roles in regional economic development, an opportunity is created to transform a university–city collaboration from an operational relationship dealing with transportation and services issues to a strategic one that is viewed as important for both organizations to achieve their goals.

My research question is:

How can universities and city governments build strategic collaborations to advance their goals and activities in regional economic development? The sub-questions are:

1. How do the context of a city and university and the history of past interaction between them influence the goals and structure of the collaboration?
2. What management processes are important for developing and maintaining or re-establishing trust and building confidence in a university–city collaboration?
3. What are the practical implications for universities and cities that wish to build successful collaborations for regional economic development?

My research will address a number of gaps identified in the literature review that is summarized in the next chapter. This study addresses the lack of research on the post-formation stage of collaboration, as many studies focus on the drivers for entering into a collaboration (Hutt, Stafford, Walker & Reingen, 2000; Spekman *et al.*, 1998 in Ireland *et al.*, 2002; Barringer & Harrison, 2000). The majority of studies are of private sector or private–public sector relationships. This thesis will also add to the small inventory of studies involving two public sector organizations and university–city collaborations.

³ Davies (2003) places these efforts in the Systematic—High Priority quadrant, which is characterized by a clear mission and priorities, sound business analysis, a relevant support framework, investment, and a dedicated organizational structure among other factors.

Universities provide an interesting case given their complexity and the loosely coupled nature of their governance. Most importantly, my research focusses on management and communication processes—the “doing of collaboration”. This is a gap identified by Thomson and Perry (2006), who call for further research that goes inside and attempts to make sense of “the black box of collaboration”. Wagstaff (2013, p. 9) distinguishes between managing the structure of the collaboration and managing the process of the collaboration, or the “way things are done”. Managing the process includes paying attention to “the more subtle and nuanced aspects of the partnership that ultimately contribute to the quality of the relationship. There is a requirement for relationship building, flexibility and creativity, cross-cultural skill, patience and perseverance. . . . It is in the less clearly differentiated, more ambiguous relational aspects of the partnership that the seeds of success or failure are sown.” Studying these processes is important given that the strategic intent of a relationship often evolves over time and involves continuous mutual adaptation and recalibration (Koza & Lewin, 2000).

The remaining structure of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter Two summarizes the results of reviewing the management and higher education literature to identify common themes and issues in building interorganizational collaborations. The chapter also identifies relevant literature on the roles of universities in regional economic development, university–city relationships, and university–community engagement.

Chapter Three outlines the research question, strategy, and design and explains my methods for managing my insider role and position.

Chapter Four provides contextual information about universities and local governments in the Province of British Columbia and provides an overview of the case study university and two cities.

Chapters Five and Six provide an account of the evolution of the collaboration between SFU and two of its host cities, the City of Burnaby and the City of Surrey. Themes and factors participants deemed critical are identified and explored.

Chapter Seven contrasts the two case studies, presents findings from my research about factors found to influence the collaboration between a university and a city, and identifies the critical management structures and processes. Limitations to the research and recommendations for further research and for practice are shared.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter begins by describing the steps taken in the literature search and the determination of definitions. I then summarize factors that researchers have identified as important for managing interorganizational alliances; these are organized by body of literature. Themes common across the various bodies of literature are then categorized according to whether the factor is an antecedent to the collaboration or can be classified as a management process.

2.1 Definitions and Literature Review Approach

2.1.1 Steps in the Literature Review

I conducted the review to find literature that would deepen my understanding of the issues and factors involved in building successful university–local government strategic collaborations, including management processes, and to identify gaps in the literature that I could address during my research.

After determining that there were few studies specific to university–local government collaborations, I searched several related bodies of literature including:

1. The management literature on inter-organizational alliances among private sector firms, including the literature on trust
2. The public sector literature on collaboration
3. The higher education literature on university–community engagement, including studies of the roles universities play in regional economic development

While I was interested in collaborations formed for regional economic development, the review was more general in nature, considering collaborations formed for a variety of purposes. I also explored the literature on the life cycle of collaborations and, because trust emerged as a common theme, additional literature on trust.

There is a consensus among scholars that the literature on interorganizational collaborations and alliances is chaotic and challenging to integrate. Huxham (2003) comments on the wide variety of disciplines, research paradigms, theoretical perspectives, and sectoral focuses in the research. He describes the research field as hindered by a lack of common terminology and mutual recognition of research across disciplines and paradigms. Thomson *et al.* (2006) also believe the research lacks coherence across the disciplines. The absence of consensus among scholars makes it difficult to compare findings across studies and know whether it is actually collaboration that is being measured. Osborn and Hagedoorn (1997, p. 262) describe alliance research as “a chaotic research field, replete with multiple theories, research designs, and units of analysis, [that] is ripe for an era of integrative theory development”. Bell *et al.* (2006, p. 1608) state that for alliance dynamics, “progress is impeded by theoretical diversity and insufficient knowledge accumulation. As such, the field is fragmented, lacks coherence, and has produced non-comparable research. It might even be described as chaotic.”

2.1.2 Definitions of Interorganizational Alliances and Collaborations

A variety of forms of interorganizational relationships exist in practice and are discussed in the literature. Barringer and Harrison (2000) provide an overview of the common interorganizational forms, which vary in the tightness of the coupling between the two organizations. These include joint ventures, networks, consortia, alliances, trade associations, and interlocking directorates. The terminology used to describe relationships involving private sector organizations varies, but a common term is an *alliance*, “an arrangement between two or more firms that establishes an exchange relationship but has no joint ownership involved” (Barringer & Harrison, 2000, p. 383).

A *strategic alliance* is defined as “a purposive relationship between two or more independent firms that involves the exchange, sharing, or codevelopment of resources or capabilities to achieve mutually relevant benefits” (Gulati, 1995, p. 46, in Kale & Singh, 2009). While Barringer and Harrison (2000) consider alliances temporary mechanisms, other authors take a more flexible view. Osborn and Hagedoorn (1997, p. 274) argue that researchers should “abandon a singular, clear-cut description of alliances and networks”. Alliances can be temporary mechanisms as well as long-lasting relationships, often with intended purposes but also with emergent benefits that may be more important.

Thomson *et al.* (2009, p. 25) use the term *collaboration* to describe “a process in which autonomous or semi-autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interaction”.

For my research, I use the term *interorganizational collaboration* instead of *alliances* to reflect my subsequent decision to focus on the process of collaborations. In the next section, the concept of the life cycle of interorganizational collaborations will be described.

2.1.3 The Life Cycle of a Collaboration

Collaborations have a life cycle, or a series of phases that the collaboration passes through. Kale and Singh (2009) outline the phases as: a) the formation phase, during which a decision is made to enter into an alliance and a partner is selected; b) the design phase, during which appropriate governance is established to oversee the alliance; and c) the post-formation phase, during which a firm manages the alliance on an ongoing basis. Several key factors or drivers are relevant to success at each of these stages. At the post-formation alliance management stage, the key drivers of alliance success are programming, use of hierarchy, and trust. Davies (2012) also provides a life cycle model that proceeds through the following stages: development, initiation, growth, consolidation, stagnation, decay, and termination. Phases of stagnation and possible decline/termination can occur unless renewal measures are undertaken in the consolidation phase.

Other researchers have examined Kale and Singh's (2009) activities and processes in the post-formation alliance management phase. Thomson and Perry (2006, p. 21) consider the process framework of collaboration and suggest that, “collaboration occurs over time as organizations interact formally and informally through repetitive sequences of negotiation, development of commitment, and execution of those commitments”. The different dimensions of the process (governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms of trust and reciprocity) will be discussed in the following section.

The following section summarizes the literature on management processes in collaboration with a view to identifying the factors that lead to successful collaborations.

2.2 Building Successful Interorganizational Collaborations

2.2.1 Interorganizational Alliances in the Management Literature

The consensus in the management literature, given the high failure rates (Das & Teng, 2000) and low success rates (Mohr & Spekman, 1994) of collaborations, is that they face major challenges. In the strategic alliance literature analysing private-sector firm partnerships, studies have shown that between 30 and 70 percent of alliances neither meet the goals of their parent companies nor deliver on the operational or strategic benefits they are intended to provide (Bamford, Gomes-Casseres, & Robinson, 2004, in Kale & Singh, 2009). Huxham (2003, p. 420) concludes that "making collaboration work effectively is highly resource consuming and often painful. . . . [D]on't do it unless you have to."

Some studies have examined the strategic similarities between partners to determine whether these similarities contribute to success in interorganizational collaborations. Saxton, in his 1997 study of 98 alliances from eight countries in the field of chemicals and allied products, found a positive relationship between benefits accrued from participation in the alliance and partner reputation, shared decision-making, and strategic similarities between partners. An interesting finding is that similarities between partners with respect to specific organizational characteristics (such as culture and human resources) had a negative relationship with alliance success. Organizational process similarities were negatively correlated with initial satisfaction.

The history of a relationship between the two collaborating organizations can be a factor in developing a successful collaboration. Thomson and Perry (2006), building on Woods and Gray (1991), identify the previous history of collaboration as an important antecedent, along with resources, risk sharing, and a level of interdependence. A favourable history of successful joint initiatives can lead to greater confidence and willingness to take risks on new or larger projects. A history characterized by negative incidents, failed projects, and misunderstandings can result in reluctance to commit to further joint work or even cause

representatives of organizations to avoid contact and communication. While according to Zaheer and Harris (2006) there has been very little formalized research investigating the topic of trust repair at the interorganizational level, they also conclude that the length of time the partner organizations have been together or even the mere presence of prior relations between two organizations is unrelated to trust.

Collaborations can also be viewed through an organizational learning framework in which collaboration is a response by organizations to environmental changes that demand improvement in the organization's know-how, technological capabilities, and/or understanding of rapidly changing markets or circumstances (Osborn & Hagedoorn, 1997). Research has also shown that non-equity alliances may promote reciprocal information exchange more than joint ventures and partial equity alliances, perhaps because of the reduced emphasis on setting targets and measuring progress. Researchers still do not know the mechanisms of learning or whether organizations improve their absorptive and learning capabilities through an alliance (Osborn & Hagedoorn, 1997). Ireland *et al.* (2002) feel that learning is likely an important factor in overall alliance success, and Baum (2000, p. 242) argues that "partners should treat partnerships as experiments, or action research".

Studies of collaborations can also take into account organizational culture, "the deeply embedded patterns of organizational behavior and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs, or ideologies that members have about their organization or its work" (Peterson & Spencer, 1991, p. 142). The dominant behavioural or belief pattern is "a kind of organizational glue" (Schein, 1994, p 4) communicating the organization's unique and distinctive character. The strength of culture can be influenced by the homogeneity and stability of group membership and the length and intensity of shared experiences of the group (Schein, 1984). While organizational culture can be viewed as an antecedent to the collaboration, culture can change as an organization makes adaptations although some argue that organizational culture is enduring and only changed through major events or gradually over time.

A number of factors and processes have been identified that influence the success of collaborations. Kantanen (2007) and others (Osborn & Hagedoorn, 1997; Ireland *et al.*, 2002; Bomley & Kent, 2006) highlight the need for reciprocal information sharing and

learning. Bruneel *et al.* (2010) identify the need for a wide range of interaction channels and overlapping personal and professional relationships. Kale and Singh (2009) underscore the importance of managing trust and achieving coordination through a variety of tools appropriate to the type of alliance. In two studies of Japanese equity joint ventures with partners from 11 other countries and non-equity Japanese strategic alliances with US companies, Cullen *et al.* (2000) found the role of mutual trust and commitment to be an important factor. Higher levels of mutual trust and commitment lead to better-performing alliances in financial and nonfinancial aspects. Higher levels of performance result in more mutual commitment and trust. Recommendations for practice include gradually revealing goals for the alliance. In a study of CEOs and senior management from biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and medical equipment manufacturing industries in North America, Abodor (2005) found that trust building may be a self-fulfilling prophecy in which initial expectations have a positive impact on behaviour and trust. There is some optimal level of expectations—expectations that are too high or too low can be counterproductive to trust building. Mohr and Spekman (1994) studied vertical partnerships between manufacturers and dealers in the personal computer industry. The partnership attributes of commitment, willingness to coordinate activities, and trust; communication quality and participation; and the conflict resolution technique of joint problem solving influenced success.

While strategic intent is presented as an antecedent to a collaboration, Koza and Lewin (2000, p. 148) state that “long-term success will be more likely when symmetry of strategic intents is present during formation and is maintained as an outcome of continuous mutual adaptation, recalibration and reaffirmation of strategic intents of the alliance partners”. They observe that it is not possible to predict all events that will occur, so initial symmetry is not sufficient. In his study of a university–community partnership, Baum (2000, p. 244) also highlights the need for adaptability to “provide the flexibility, time and resources necessary for [participants] to learn, change their minds, change their identities, and change their direction. Definite outcomes and adaptable processes are in tension, but they are good partners.” In further discussing the influence of power and trust, Huxham and Vangen observe that “the nurturing process must be continuous and permanent. No sooner will gains be made than a disturbance, in the form of a change to one of the partners, will shatter many of them” (2008, p. 75 in Wagstaff, 2013, p. 10).

Given the theme of trust in interorganizational relationships, which emerged in many studies as well as in conferences discussing current practice, further research on the topic of trust in interorganizational alliances was conducted. This research is the subject of the following section.

2.2.2 Trust in the Management Literature

As Bachmann and Zaheer (2006, p 2) state, “Trust moves centre stage as a vital mechanism that ensures coordinated interaction in complex relational arrangements”. Trust is defined in many ways, and scholars point out major inconsistencies in conceptualizing, operationalizing, and measuring trust (Seppanen *et al.*, 2007). Van de Ven and Smith define trust as “faith in the goodwill of others not to harm your interests when you are vulnerable to them” (in Bachmann, 2001, p. 146). This definition may be more applicable to private firms than to cities and universities. University campuses are embedded in or wedded to their cities, given their physical location, which leads to a greater likelihood of “repeat business” (Ring & Van De Ven, 1992). Das and Teng (1998, p. 494) use the outcome of *confidence*, which may be better suited to universities and cities. *Confidence* “deals with the perceived level of certainty that the partner will behave in a desirable manner” as opposed to expectations about positive motives.

The building of trust and the use of control mechanisms are seen by Das and Teng (1998) as two distinct avenues that can be pursued simultaneously to generate confidence in partner cooperation. Table 2 outlines their proposed list of trust and control mechanisms in strategic alliances that can be used to gain an understanding of collaboration dynamics.

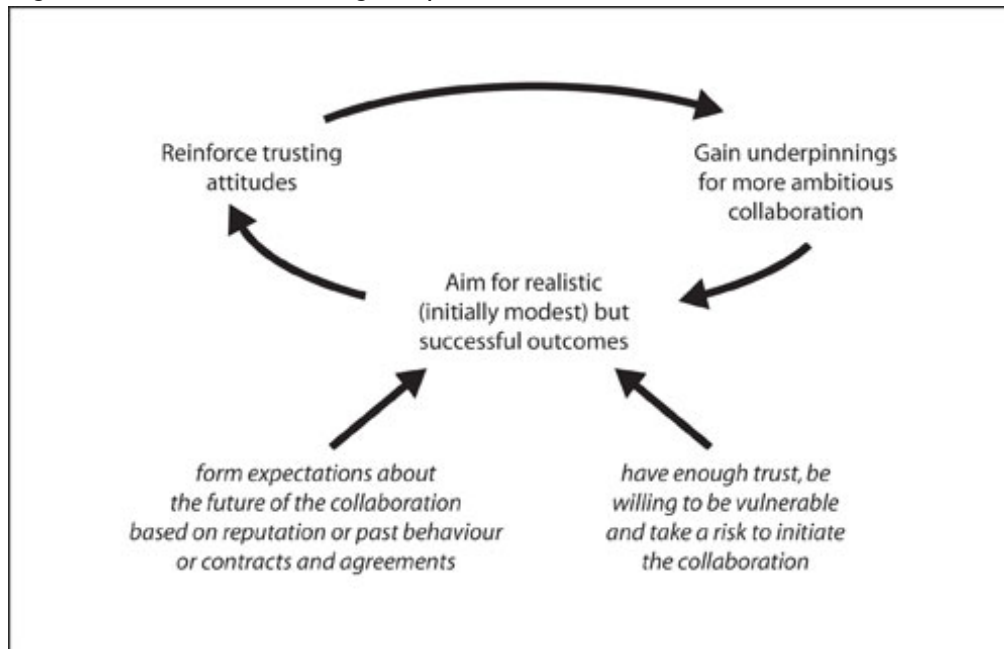
Table 2: Trust and Control Mechanisms (Das & Teng, 1998)

Trust-building mechanisms	
risk taking	evidence of risk-taking commitments
equity preservation	benefit distribution on an equitable basis
communication	communication quality (open, prompt), proactive information exchange

interfirm adaptation	making adaptations to needs of collaboration
Control mechanisms	
goal-setting process	expectation setting and establishing specific and challenging goals
structural specifications	mechanisms to safeguard against opportunism, reporting and checking devices
organizational culture blending	managing collaboration culture by blending and harmonizing organizational cultures (system of shared values and norms that define appropriate attitudes and behaviours)

While the term *trust* is often used, Huxham (2003) argues that it is appropriate to focus on trust building between partners, as the ideal of trust as a pre-condition of entering a relationship is not always feasible. Huxham and Vangen (2005) have developed a trust-building loop, which is reproduced in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Trust-Building Loop



Source: Figure 9.1 in Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p. 155

The challenge is to sustain the trust-building loop by maintaining continuous attention to the dynamics of collaboration and making adjustments in response to changes in the individuals representing the organizations. Management processes used to sustain the loop include: managing dynamics, managing power imbalances, and nurturing the collaborative relationships by paying attention to the management of communication, credit recognition, joint ownership, varying levels of commitment, and conflicting views on aims and agendas.

This list of mechanisms includes many of the factors raised as important management processes or conditions in other studies: the stability of personnel (Dyer & Chu, 2000 in Zaheer & Harris, 2006), trust between boundary spanners for the two organizations (Currall & Judge, 1995 in Zaheer & Harris, 2006), and interpersonal trust depending on the level of the organization. Trust among executives was found to be a key factor in alliance formation and issue resolution, whereas interpersonal trust among mid-level managers had a greater impact on the day-to-day efficiency of alliance operations (Zaheer, Lofstrom, & George, 2002 in Zaheer & Harris, 2006). Zaheer *et al.* (1998) found in a study of 107 buyer–supplier interfirm relationships in the electrical equipment manufacturing industry that interpersonal and interorganizational trust are related but distinct constructs and play different roles in affecting negotiation processes and exchange performance.

Reviewers of the literature on trust point to a number of challenges and deficiencies. Operational definitions of trust have varied depending on the disciplinary base and unit or level of analysis. Bachmann and Zaheer (2006, p. 147) comment, “What is remarkable about these operational definitions is how few have been developed by setting out to rigorously investigate how a variety of economic actors actually employ the concept of trust in their daily conversations and actions, using these empirical results as the basis for instrument development.” They call for more longitudinal research, stating, “We have very little empirical evidence about the evolutionary dynamics of interpersonal trust” (p. 154).

Another challenge of studying trust is that it is a complex phenomenon that occurs at different levels of analysis: individual, organizational, and interorganizational (Bachmann & Zaheer, 2006). Ring and Van de Ven (1994, p. 103) note situations in which “personal relationships increasingly supplement formal organizational role relationships, psychological contracts increasingly substitute for legal contracts, and formal

organizational agreements increasingly mirror informal understandings and commitments". Currall and Inkpen (in Bachmann & Zaheer, 2006) propose three interrelated levels, interpersonal trust, intergroup trust, and interorganizational trust, arguing that the complex nature of trust should be captured by using simultaneous assessment at multiple levels to triangulate these three levels.

Some studies question whether the presence of trust is sufficient in itself. Harland (1996) compared a UK and Spanish relationship in the European automotive aftermarket and concluded that trust and friendliness do not guarantee greater understanding and greater satisfaction. The gap between expectations and perceptions of performance in relationships was found to be of greater importance.

2.2.3 Public Sector Literature on Collaborations

A review of the limited public sector literature on collaborations was completed. Thomson and Perry (2006) adapt a framework from Wood and Gary (1991) that considers antecedents to collaboration including the previous history of efforts to collaborate, the level of interdependence, the need for resources and risk sharing, resource scarcity, and situations in which each partner has resources required by the other partner. The process of collaboration includes five dimensions that public managers must manage intentionally in order to collaborate effectively: governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms. One of Thomson and Perry's conclusions is that "without mutual benefits, information sharing will not lead to collaboration" (p. 27). In their study of 42 collaborations, Thomson and Miller (2002) observe that it was difficult to achieve exceptionally high levels of collaboration, and there was wide variation among the five dimensions.

Mattessich *et al.* (2001) identified 20 factors from the literature that they found important for the success of collaborations formed by nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and other organizations. They organize the factors into six categories (see Table 3). In areas for future research, they observe, "Even when the factors are recognized as important, their cultivation in practice is often not straightforward" (p. 33).

Table 3: Factors Influencing the Success of Collaborations

ENVIRONMENT	History of collaboration or cooperation in the community Collaboration group seen as a legitimate leader in the community Favourable political and social climate
MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS	Mutual respect, understanding, and trust Appropriate cross-section of members Members see collaboration as in their self-interest Ability to compromise
PROCESS AND STRUCTURE	Members share a stake in both process and outcome Multiple levels of participation Flexibility Development of clear roles and policy guidelines Adaptability Appropriate pace of development
COMMUNICATION	Open and frequent communication Established informal relationships and communication links
PURPOSE	Concrete, attainable goals and objectives Shared vision Unique purpose
RESOURCES	Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time Skilled leadership

Source: Mattessich et al. (2001)

Perrault *et al.* (2011) conducted a qualitative study of social workers in a regional interorganizational research consortium testing the 40-item Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory that was based on the research of Mattessich et al. (2001). Two of the factors for successful collaboration were confirmed: attention to informal connection and member relationships; and developing trust, respect, and understanding. Two additional success factors were found: having learning as a purpose and sharing leadership.

While the research on trust is summarized in the section on the management literature, trust was also identified as an important factor in collaborations in the public sector collaboration literature. McGuire (2006) states that the management of trust is problematic for public sector managers as there is no general agreement about what a public manager can do to build trust. Trust is seen as an important binder of the relationship in the absence of a legal charter. Trust may be of greater importance in public collaborations than in private sector alliances if there are greater obstacles to measuring outcomes or if a substitute for formal agreements is necessary. Gazley (2008) found that of the most active intersectoral partnerships in the state of Georgia, only half involved a contractual agreement, and the formality of such partnerships varied by sector.

Next, the literature found in the higher education and regional economic literature will be summarized and discussed.

2.2.4 The Higher Education and Regional Economic Development Literature

Factors leading to successful university–city collaborations and important management and communication processes are also studied in the higher education sector and regional economic development literature. A number of studies provide insights about the importance of history and context and key management processes discussed in this section.

2.2.4.1 History and Context

The history and context of both the local government and the university may influence the success of university–city collaborations for regional economic development by shaping the roles a university can assume (Davies, 1998) and determining the importance participating organizations place on the collaboration.

Researchers have pointed out a variety of regional factors that influence the roles a university plays in regional economic development, including the following:

- the absorptive capacity of a region's institutions and companies, which influences the ability of a region or city to take advantage of university contributions (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990);
- competition, entrepreneurship, and the presence of large companies (Lendel, 2010);
- how fully developed the region is (universities can play a larger role in helping to develop networks and transform governance arrangements in less developed regions; Benneworth & Hospers, 2007a);
- the nature of the regional industry base (Gunasekara, 2004);
- whether the region is a peripheral or core region (Boucher *et al.*, 2003);
- the type of industrial transformation that is occurring in the local economy (Lester, 2005);
- the existence of a clearly articulated regional strategy that envisions a broad role for the university (Garlick, 2000); and
- the number and scale of universities in the region and whether a university is a traditional or newer technologically oriented one (Boucher *et al.*, 2003).

2.2.4.2 Strategic Priority

Feldman and Desrochers' (2003) study of John Hopkins University's lack of direct impact on its regional economy shows the importance of the history and institutional context of a university. Measuring influence narrowly by the presence of spin-off companies or university–industry co-operative relationships, the authors conclude that the main reason for the lack of impact was that commercializing research was never part of the university's objective. An unsupportive culture for innovation created a lack of incentives and encouragement to faculty. Early public failures only exacerbated the situation. At the other end of the spectrum, Bramwell and Wolfe (2008) showcase the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, as an example of an entrepreneurial university that promotes these values explicitly and supports institutional enablers of an entrepreneurial culture. Faculty and students attracted to this model are encouraged to establish links with local technology firms through flexible intellectual property policies and services.

Tibbitt (2014) argues that the university should recognize its regional role and incentivise support staff. The strategic nature of a collaboration should be evident in the case of institution-wide collaborations that are intentional. Davies (2003), working in the area of

university internationalization, categorizes the efforts of universities into four quadrants: ad-hoc—low priority; systematic—low priority; ad hoc—high priority; and systematic—high priority. These quadrants codify differences in the level of policy development and agreements, support network, and investment, including whether a dedicated organizational structure exists.

2.2.4.3 Important Management Processes

Other authors focus not on the form of interorganizational alliances but instead on the processes used in managing those alliances.

Have the university and the local government prioritized the collaboration and committed resources to its maintenance? Virtanen (2002) recommends that contacts with key stakeholders be institutionalized to ensure that relationships are entered into and maintained patiently and systematically. Interaction should involve multiple levels of the organization. Kantanen (2007, p. 57) argues that the identification and prioritization of stakeholders, “publics that count”, is often a first step in moving towards advanced relationship enhancement programmes that include the allocation of resources to the creation and maintenance of the relationship. Jongbloed *et al.* (2008, p. 25) advocates for a real commitment to stakeholders that includes “seeking and using ways of engaging in a dialogue with its various stakeholders in order to learn more about how its services are valued and how and where it can do better”.

Gajda (2004) provides a continuum based on levels of integration in order to evaluate strategic alliances ranging from networking to cooperating, partnering, merging, or unifying. Each level is characterized by different strategies and tasks, leadership and decision-making approaches, and interpersonal and communication requirements. The level she calls “partnering” is closest to the definition of collaboration in which organizations share resources to seek a mutual goal but remain autonomous. Compared to the emerging and unifying levels of integration, partnering introduces less interpersonal conflict and reduces the degree of commitment and investment.

There is limited literature on university–city collaborations. A major barrier highlighted in this literature is the complexity of universities and the challenges faced by organizations

attempting to gain access to universities (Goddard, 2010; Goddard & Kempton, 2011; Goddard & Puukka, 2008; Goddard & Vallance, 2011; Tibbitt, 2014). Goddard and Chatterton (1999 in Chatterton & Goddard, 2000, p. 482) highlight the interface of management processes that exists between a region and a university. Each organization has its own processes and can design additional structures or processes to connect the organizations. Interface mechanisms can be put in place to supplement existing management processes. In a recent article, Tibbitt (2014, p. 6) urges the need for cities to be more proactive:

The present context demands that it is time for regional authorities to “reach in” to higher education institutions and seek out solutions to the issues they face. It is a common complaint from business and from public policy-makers that “getting in” is not easy. It requires clarity about what is sought, and determination to establish innovative partnership activities to secure the benefits required and expected. . . City and regional authorities need to be clear [about] what they want and need from HEIs [Higher Education Institutions], secure it from “the willing” and demand it from the others.

Studies in the higher education literature identify management processes important for building successful interorganizational collaborations (Holland, 2005; Inman & Schuetze, 2010; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008; Wiewel & Lieber, 1998). Holland (2005) summarizes the principles and characteristics of effective university–community partnerships published by several organizations, including Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, the Council of Independent Colleges, and Campus Compact. The common elements include attention to communication patterns and relationships of mutual trust, respect, genuineness, and commitment. Campus Compact provides eight essential features or benchmarks of campus–community collaborations organized into three stages of relationship development: designing the partnership, building collaborative relationships, and sustaining partnerships over time. The second stage includes forging interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

University collaborative efforts can also be categorized according to where the collaboration falls along the continuum of “self to shared interest” (Enos & Morton, 2003). With a focus on university-community service learning relationships, Enos & Morton (2003) describe a difference between transactional and transformational relationships. Transactional relationships are “instrumental, designed to complete a task with no greater plan or promise” (p 24). These relationships work within an organization’s existing

structure. In comparison, a transformative relationship commences with tasks less defined and a goal to have a deeper and more sustained relationship that may lead to a change in the organizations. Goddard and Kempton (2011) also distinguish between transactional and transformational activities but use a different definition. Transactional activities, such as zoning submissions, are seen as potentially having a negative impact on transitioning to a higher-level partnership. One might suggest another scenario where a higher-level partnership can assist with a transactional activity, as small issues are more likely to be dealt with positively if the overall health of the relationship is good.

The important role of knowledge brokers and liaison people. The lack of communication and boundary-spanning skills of both the university and the city are highlighted as barriers to collaboration (Goddard, 2010; Goddard & Puukka, 2008; and Goddard & Vallance, 2011). Universities can take a variety of approaches to bridging the distance between the university and its community by creating units designed for this purpose; these may include technology transfer offices or specific projects or initiatives that build in this function as part of the governance, processes, and resources. Working within these structures or units, effective liaison people, sometimes referred to as boundary spanners or knowledge brokers, are often cited as a factor important to the success of the collaboration (Atkins *et al.*, 1999; Meyer, 2010; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008; Reichert, 2006; Williams, 2002).⁴ While the liaison role is defined in various ways, the general concept is the need for individuals to act as animators and translators at the university–stakeholder interface and help in building community partnerships. This is even more important in peripheral regions where there may be a lack of stakeholder ability and capacity. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) highlight the importance of boundary spanners in knowledge flow, stressing that community partners evaluate the effectiveness of institutional engagement through their relationships with boundary spanners. Some important skills and aptitudes of boundary spanners include: being a good listener, modelling a service ethic, managing power, and maintaining neutrality. While boundary spanners are often thought of as individuals, Radin (1996 in Thomson & Perry, 2006) suggests that the responsibility of boundary spanning may be shared among managers. Noble and Jones (2006) highlight the different management processes that boundary

⁴ Some scholars argue that universities also need to develop mechanisms to connect academic disciplines within the university (Barden, 1995, cited by Thanki, 1999, p. 87) and to connect research and teaching roles (Walshok, 1997).

spanners use in specific stages of the partnership. They note that a boundary spanner plays a role different from that of a champion. The former are more involved in day-to-day relationship-building activities, while champions are senior managers and/or politicians who are leaders in their organizations.

The importance of frequent and sustained contact. A number of studies highlight the importance of frequent and sustained contact between representatives of the two collaborating organizations (Hutchinson & Huberman, 1993, in Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Torres (2000) finds that partnerships may be seen as a series of interpersonal relationships built on top of one another to create a bond between institutions. He notes that collaborative relationships are not created from the top down and that trust emerges gradually as a working relationship develops. The nature of loosely coupled organizations such as universities can be of benefit in allowing representatives to respond quickly to issues that arise.

The importance of trust and respect. Trust and respect are often mentioned in the literature as necessary underlying conditions of university–community collaborations even though the fixed location of universities might discourage actions that create short-term advantages at the expense of the longer-term relationship.

2.3 Conclusion

Table 4 categorizes and lists factors important to university–city collaborations identified in the various bodies of literature.

Table 4: Summary of Important Factors in University–City Collaborations

Antecedents
Context of the region: Influences the roles a city and university play in regional economic development and the strategic importance of collaboration
Context of the university: Influences the roles a university plays in regional economic development and the strategic importance of collaboration
History of the relationship: Influences the level of trust and confidence in the collaboration and expectations
Strategic intent: The centrality of the collaboration influences the organizations' commitment and willingness to dedicate resources to maintaining the collaboration
Critical Management Processes
Communication quality and participation including levels of interaction Liaison people/boundary spanners Interface structures Trust-building processes to set expectations, seek mutuality, take risks, preserve equity, and encourage adaptability

These are the factors that guided my choice of research focus and were used as a template for collecting evidence.

In the next chapter, my research question, design, and methodology will be described.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines approaches I took to researching university–local government collaborations. I aimed to develop a greater understanding of university–local government collaborations for regional economic development. To achieve this, I was required to document the existing relationship, specifically interorganizational structures and processes of interaction, but also to understand the context and the dynamics of interaction over time. These needs led me to incorporate a number of data collection methods in my research design.

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Choice of Case Study Approach

I chose case study research, a form of naturalistic inquiry (Cousin, 2009). A case study looks in depth at one or a small number of organizations and studies a phenomenon in its real-world context (Yin, 2011). Given that I was studying relationships and processes within social settings that tend to be interconnected and interrelated (Denscombe, 2007), the use of a case study allowed the situation to be considered in a holistic manner. The case study approach also facilitates causal analysis (Gerring, 2007), supporting my goal of understanding why certain events occur.

Gerring (2007, p. 29) asserts that what distinguishes the case method from all other methods is “its reliance on evidence drawn from a single case and its attempt, at the same time, to illuminate features of a broader set of cases”. I used a “cross-case” approach or a sample of cases (Gerring, 2007) to look at university–city relationships in two different situations and thus learn from their similarities and differences (Denscombe, 2007). Multiple-case studies typically provide a stronger base for theory building (Yin, 1994, in Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 27), as propositions are grounded in a broader base of evidence.

3.1.2 Selection of Cases

While theories and constructs identified during my literature review contributed to my analysis of the data, this research did not test any overriding theory. As the purpose of the research was to help develop theory by integrating factors and theories, theoretical as opposed to random or stratified sampling was appropriate (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Through my employer, Simon Fraser University (SFU), I had access to three possible university–city relationships that could illuminate the complex relationship among various constructs and theories. I chose two of the three relationships for in-depth case studies as opposed to studying all three relationships; this allowed me to research each case in greater depth without losing the benefits of comparing different cases. Patterns of relationships among constructs that hold across the two cases of successful collaborative projects could allow identification of common factors of importance (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Two case studies were chosen: SFU’s relationships with the City of Burnaby and the City of Surrey. These cases were felt to represent extremes (Gerring, 2007) of age, size, and perceived health of the relationship. I felt this would potentially lead to greater contrasts in the data and more insights into the factors influencing the relationships. I eliminated the possibility of studying one city and two universities because in both cities, the other institutions (the British Columbia Institute of Technology and Kwantlen Polytechnic University) have different provincial mandates.

The success of the relationship between SFU and the City of Burnaby is perceived by university representatives as mixed, with many important impacts resulting from SFU’s location in Burnaby but also conflicts and issues involving planning and embracing the university as a partner in regional economic development.

The collaboration between the City of Surrey and SFU is believed to be an exemplary case “reflecting a strong positive example of phenomenon of interest” (Yin, 1993, p. 12, in Cousin, 2009). I also benefited from 12 years of personal experience with and knowledge of this university–city relationship. Following a social constructionist epistemology, I believe the advantage of my experience outweighed the challenges of managing personal biases.

3.1.3 Data Collection

A case study approach allowed data to be gathered from a number of sources, including document review and personal interviews. This supported a rich understanding of the history and current workings of each partnership. I provided periodic progress reports and documented any changes made to my approach during the course of the study. These field notes and opportunities for reflexivity were kept separate from the data that was collected as part of the study (Soy, 1996).

3.1.3.1 Document Review

The document review was conducted to gain a historical understanding of the genesis of each campus and the dynamics of the historical relationship between the city and the university. Documents gathered included historical correspondence, signed agreements, existing minutes or correspondence related to joint meetings, and media articles and speeches that referenced the relationship or a joint initiative.

The account of the history and evolution of the relationship between SFU and the City of Burnaby was developed from a number of sources. The primary source was a search of the SFU archives. I obtained and reviewed the available correspondence from the University President's Office and a few other administrative areas, including the Office of the Vice-President for Finance and Administration. Access was limited in some of the files due to confidentiality. Copies of relevant documents were taken and reviewed.

I also conducted a search of archived articles in *Burnaby Matters*, a local newspaper. Through a search for "Simon Fraser University", I identified articles published between 1965 and 1997 and made copies of articles that appeared to have relevant titles. I did not conduct searches of the Burnaby city archives for correspondence but instead obtained copies of city council reports that were identified using media articles or SFU correspondence. While there is an official Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee, only the agendas of recent past meetings were obtained. Minutes were not taken at those meetings. Further details of my archival review for the SFU–City of Burnaby case are provided in Appendix A.

In the case of the relationship between SFU Surrey and the City of Surrey, I was able to access copies of primary written correspondence dating back to the inception of the campus from files from the Office of the Executive Director, SFU Surrey, as well as records of my own emails exchanged while serving as the Founding Executive Director for an 11-year period from 2002 to 2013.

From this research, I wrote a summary of the genesis and evolution of the relationship that identified phases and major milestones and provided my observations about possible themes of and influences on the relationship. A historical approach was used to document the long SFU–City of Burnaby, in part because there were many planning and relationship issues and little evidence of collaborative projects. In the SFU–City of Surrey relationship, I documented the approach taken to building the collaboration given the absence of any significant relationship issues and the difficulty of designating phases in this shorter relationship.

The initial summary of the Burnaby relationship was shown to two retired individuals: the Executive Director of the Office of the President and a former City of Burnaby staff member who wished to remain anonymous. Two senior SFU administrators also reviewed a completed draft. The chapter on the Surrey relationship was reviewed by the retired city manager and a retired SFU staff member who were involved in the relationship. These individuals were asked whether the summary accurately reflected their understanding and to provide clarification and additional interpretations that were then incorporated into the chapters.

3.1.3.2 Personal Interviews

Interviews were conducted to allow me to elicit a variety of opinions and perspectives about major influences on the relationship and to obtain feedback on its structures and management and communication processes. Personal interviews allowed me the opportunity to probe with questions to understand participants' feelings and emotions (Gerring, 2007). Individual interviews were conducted to eliminate the possible impact of power differences among city representatives and university representatives that would have been evident in a focus group setting. The disadvantage of interviews, especially with the managers of each organization, was that it was uncertain whether interviewees would

avoid truthful opinions to protect an organizational or personal image. I tried to put interviewees at ease and encouraged positive as well as negative views. I also interviewed a large number of retired individuals who were more likely to provide objective and honest assessments.

The perspectives and data generated in the interviews supplemented my experience, and I took care to minimize the danger of familiarity by using an interview guide as opposed to specific questions in the goal of finding insights.

Twenty-six semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted in person with participants from the City of Burnaby, the City of Surrey, SFU, and third-party organizations. Four of the interviews were conducted for a previous University of Bath paper. All individuals approached accepted the invitation to participate in the study. Interviews were typically an hour in length but ranged from 40 minutes to over two hours. In all but one case, as discussed above, interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. An initial questionnaire guide (see Appendix B) was used and distributed to participants in advance of the interview. The guide identified the issues to be discussed, but the exact wording and the order of questions were not predetermined. Open-ended questions encouraged interviewees to respond with ideas and perspectives about the issues raised, and follow-up questions were used to probe deeper.

The list of positions of interviewees is provided in the following table. Interviewees were selected to provide perspectives from several levels of the organization, including university faculty and staff, and elected officials and managers from each city. City councillors selected were those who had either a major role in economic development and/or had the longest history of past interactions with SFU. For the SFU interviews, the individuals selected were those responsible for maintaining the relationship as well as persons who have had extensive interactions with the cities and were able to provide historical perspective. Third-party views were also provided by chief executive officers of the boards of trade, a business improvement association, and SFU UniverCity Trust, who interact with both the city government and SFU.

At the beginning of each interview, I attempted to build credibility and rapport and encourage openness. At the conclusion, I used the snowballing technique, asking the

interviewee for others I should interview (Denscombe, 2007), especially people who might have a different opinion or understanding of the relationship. Three additional interviews that were not originally planned were conducted as a result.

Table 5: List of Positions of Interviewees

Organization	Interviewee
University: Burnaby (9)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current President 2. Past President 1 3. Past President 2 4. Past President 3 5. Former Executive Director, President's office 6. Former University Architect and Chief Facilities Officer 7. Former Vice-President, Academic 8. Current Faculty Member Communications (Burnaby) 9. Former Director of Government Relations (Burnaby & Surrey)
University: Surrey (2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Current Faculty Member, School of Mechatronics 11. Current Event and Marketing Coordinator
City of Burnaby (6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Current Mayor 13. Current Councillor 14. Current City Manager 15. Past City Planner 16. Past Councillor 17. Anonymous Past Staff Member
City of Surrey (6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Former Mayor 19. Current City Manager 20. Current Director, Economic Development 21. Councillor (from previous study) 22. City Manager (from previous study) 23. Manager of Investment & Government Relations (from previous study)

Organization	Interviewee
Third-Party Organizations (3)	24. CEO, Burnaby Board of Trade 25. CEO, UniverCity 26. Executive Director, Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association (from previous study)

3.2 Data Interpretation

“The primary purpose of gathering data in naturalistic inquiry is to gain the ability to construct reality in ways that are consistent and compatible with the constructions of a setting’s inhabitants” (Erlandson *et al.*, 1993, p. 81). A large amount of data was gathered through document analysis and interviews. In naturalistic inquiry, data collection and data analysis occur in concurrent and integrated steps that build on each other. To accomplish my analysis, I employed NVivo analysis software, inputting all transcripts and then using the following coding strategy:

1. A coding of trust building and control mechanisms based on Das and Teng (1998) as follows: Trust building mechanisms: risk taking, equity preservation, communication and interfirm adaption; Control mechanisms: goal-setting process, structural specifications, organizational culture blending.
2. A coding according to the constructs previous research used to explain success in collaborations or collaboration processes not captured by the Das and Teng (1998) trust building and control mechanisms:
 - University context
 - City context
 - Collaboration history
 - Centrality/strategic nature
 - Mutuality
 - Boundary spanners
 - Learning
 - Expectations
 - Interface structures

3. Several additional themes that emerged during the interviews, so the following categories, sub-categories, and dimensions were added:
 - Geographic location
 - Governance and provincial–municipal politics
 - Informal-social
 - Organizational level
 - Mayor–president relationship

The goal was to find new patterns, relationships, and perspectives through the multiple realities provided by respondents and other data (Erlandson *et al.*, 1993). After the coding and analysis process, summary “thick descriptions” of the two relationships were developed in addition to the genesis and evolution summary previously referenced.

The use of thick descriptions, including quotes from interviewees, was intended to put the reader in context (Erlandson *et al.*, 1993, pp.40–41) and allow them to determine whether my observations were applicable to their situations (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).

Erlandson *et al.* (1993, p. 18) summarize the challenges I faced as follows: “Interpretation is both limited and enriched by context. Interpretation is limited as context drives constantly toward greater specificity; at the same time the accumulation of specific detail provided by context describes a set of intimate relationships that bring the researcher or reader vicariously into the setting.” The difficulty in presenting each case was finding the right balance of “better stories vs. better theories”, as noted by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 29). I attempted to find an optimum balance, particularly given multiple cases.

The resulting analysis was then reviewed and written and added to the section discussing the important themes and factors of each case study. The various identified management processes were then assessed for each case study. These included:

- The use of joint committees
- The role of presidents and city mayors
- Relationship building across different organizational levels
- Liaison people/boundary spanners
- Informal/social opportunities and individual relationships
- Use of third-party organizations

A comparative analysis of cases was then completed to draw out further conclusions and summarized in the final chapter.

3.3 Achieving Trustworthiness and Managing Ethical Issues

I attempted to achieve trustworthiness in the study in a number of ways including using different data collection methods and sources of data, developing thick descriptions that were reviewed by participants, and managing ethical issues (Creswell & Miller, 2000, in Anfara *et al.*, 2002).

“Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection” (Creswell, 2002, p. 280, in Anfara *et al.*, 2002). In this study, I used multiple sources of data, including interviews and documents that presented multiple perspectives on different events and relationships from a range of individuals, including third-party participants. Alternative explanations were encouraged and considered. I continually asked myself whether findings and perspectives were “retrospective sense-making by image-conscious informants” (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, p. 28). I tried to reduce this risk by using a number of knowledgeable participants, including retired employees, who viewed the relationship from diverse perspectives, and by using archival documents.

In naturalistic inquiry, there is no single objective reality, and I was the primary research instrument (Erlandson *et al.*, 1993, p. 30). Given the unevenness of knowledge about the two contexts, I spent more time in the data-gathering period gaining knowledge of the university’s relationship with the City of Burnaby. I provided write-ups of the case studies to several individuals to ensure that I had captured the essence of the context and situation. Three current or former SFU colleagues reviewed the Burnaby chapter and one former SFU colleague reviewed the Surrey chapter. Retired representatives from each city reviewed draft chapters. I incorporated any alternative views in subsequent drafts.

I completed my thesis over a three-year period, and most of the prime interviews and observations were gathered over a one-year timeframe. I sought all opportunities to collect data and observations that would improve my understanding. I was assisted by the

knowledge I bring from my 12-year involvement with the university's relationship with the City of Surrey as well as my over 20-year history at SFU. I used different methods of interpretation, with a process of constant and tentative analysis. Managing the ethical implications of my insider role and dealing with any political ramifications from research findings presented challenges. With my study topic and approach, there was little danger of being isolated from the data and human interaction that are the heart of the research, which Erlandson *et al.* (1993) argue is a worse fate than the dangers of bias and reactivity. I attempted to ensure rigor, creativity, and open-mindedness in the research processes while avoiding confusion and other pitfalls (Anfara *et al.*, 2002).

I received ethics approval from SFU, my employer and the financial sponsor of my doctorate. Permission was granted by SFU (president), the City of Surrey (mayor and city manager), and the City of Burnaby (mayor and city manager) to proceed with the study and to conduct the proposed interviews. Interviewees and meeting participants signed informed consent forms confirming they were made aware of the purpose of the study, the nature of their participation, and the intended uses of the research. Participants were given the right to restrict use of their names or positions in any published results and/or make "off the record" comments and quotes not attributed to them. This privilege was taken in a few instances. I did not attribute comments to an individual when those comments could have had any harmful or negative effect or posed any perceived risk of reputational damage to the individual's organization, particularly when those comments involved an individual's style or character.

"It is precisely because the qualitative researchers are working in their own culture that they can make the long interview do such powerful work" (McCracken, 1988, pp.11–12). I was aware of the challenge of minimizing the dangers of familiarity and taking advantage of my experiences. Where I had a working relationship with interviewees, I attempted to manufacture distance by making written requests and having them sign the ethics documentation while still putting them at ease at the beginning of each interview.

Another key ethics principle is maintaining the independence of research despite any conflicts of interest or partiality (Institute of Education). With my direct involvement in building the City of Surrey relationship, I may be subject to criticism that any positive elements of this case results from my bias. I was open about my position and SFU role

and attempted to elicit both positive and negative comments. I deliberately looked for conflicting data to disconfirm the analysis (Soy, 1996). As I was more familiar with the history and context of the City of Surrey and SFU Surrey, I focussed more effort on understanding the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship.

Reflexivity and transparency throughout the process were documented. I took the advice of McCracken (1988) to review my cultural and personal experience with the topic of interest by documenting my beliefs and assumptions on university–city collaborations. I continually reminded myself to attempt to have my current beliefs disproven to generate new ideas (Easterby-Smith, 2002) and to understand my assumptions, overt or hidden.

In the next section of this chapter, background is provided on the post-secondary sector and local governments of British Columbia, SFU, and the two cities of Burnaby and Surrey.

Chapter Four: Background on Case Study Campuses and Cities

4.1 The Post-Secondary Sector in BC

Simon Fraser University is located in the Province of British Columbia (BC), Canada's third largest province in terms of population. In Canada, the ten provinces and three territories have jurisdiction over education. The role of the federal government is primarily to fund research, and most universities are public (Dennison, 2006). In BC, the post-secondary sector is comprised of 25 public institutions, including 11 universities, 11 colleges, and three institutes, which enroll more than 440,000 students (AVED, 2014). Simon Fraser University is one of five research universities that perform the majority of the research in BC's post-secondary sector (RUCBC, 2014).

Many changes have occurred in BC's university sector over the past two decades. There has been an increase in government interventions, including the imposition of a ceiling on tuition increases and the issuing of accountability letters that define objectives for each institution. More recently, in 2014, a core review of the post-secondary system was conducted with a focus on "re-engineering of our secondary and post-secondary institutions to ensure our students have the skills for the jobs of the future" (Shaw, 2014). The struggling provincial fiscal situation has prevented any significant growth of post-secondary student spaces since 2010. Tuition caps and funding reductions are requiring post-secondary institutions to seek other revenue sources, such as international student tuition, in order to maintain quality education and services. Over the years, there has also been declining provincial investment to support research and commercialization activities either by matching federal research funding or by maintaining provincial organizations that support these activities. The provincial government values university collaborations with city governments where it leads to improved social, economic and cultural opportunities or reduces costs for the post-secondary partner. However, the provincial government or responsible ministry does not provide specific funding for university–city government initiatives.

4.1.2 Simon Fraser University

Simon Fraser University has three campuses in BC's three largest cities. Over the past 50 years, SFU and each of its host cities have significantly transformed in terms of population growth and the development of neighbourhoods and industries.

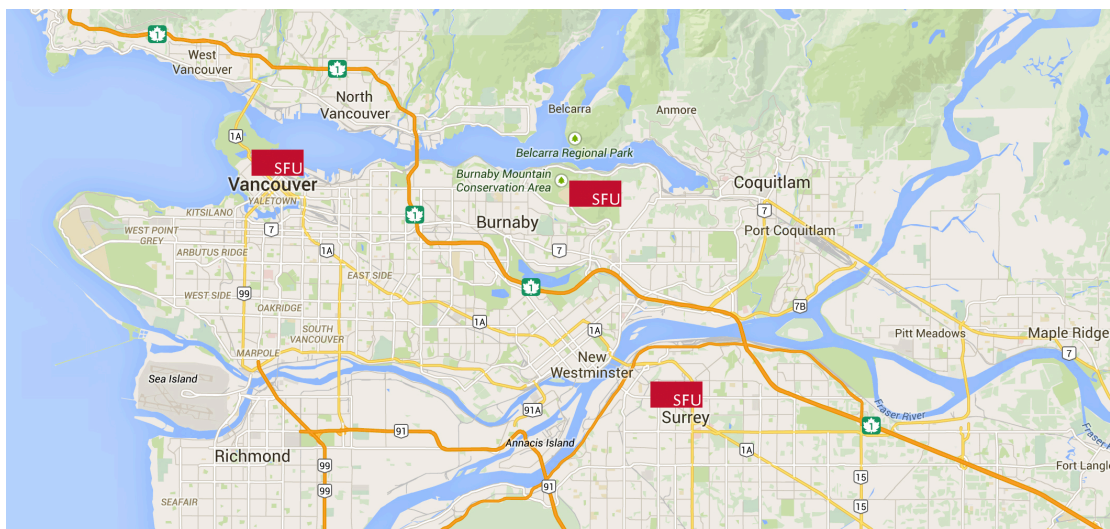
Simon Fraser University is BC's second oldest and second largest university in terms of student population. The original campus in Burnaby opened on September 9, 1965, on vacant land on a mountaintop at the eastern edge of the city, with 2,628 students. Simon Fraser was dubbed the "instant university" because it was built over an 18-month timeframe (SFU Learning and Instructional Development Centre (LIDC), 2010). The original intention was that SFU be an institution unbound by tradition. Living up to this vision, the university has had many firsts in its history among Canadian universities, including having student representatives on its senate (1964), utilising the trimester system and providing courses year round (1965), and offering an executive MBA for people with non-business backgrounds (1968; LIDC, 2010; SFU, 2010a).

Simon Fraser University was the first university located in Vancouver's downtown. The Vancouver campus, SFU's second after the original campus in Burnaby, officially opened in 1989, although the university had begun offering continuing education from a small storefront in the early 1980s. Today, continuing education and non-credit offerings have expanded to serve a student body of approximately 10,000 students in a wide range of undergraduate courses and professional graduate degrees. Research activities and meeting and conference facilities increase the reach of the campus, which attracts over 70,000 visitors a year (SFU website).

The Surrey campus was established in 2002 as part of the newly designated Surrey City Centre, in a neighbourhood challenged by crime. The City Centre effort had been initiated several years earlier with the redevelopment of a failing shopping mall to include a new university and an office tower. From the beginning, the Surrey campus had a mission to play a role in regional economic development, and it has an extensive and active relationship with its host city and the general community.

Over the past decade, SFU participated in the BC government's most ambitious post-secondary growth plan in the province's history. In 2003, the BC government funded 25,000 new student spaces, a one-sixth increase in post-secondary capacity. Through this expansion, SFU, BC's second largest university, grew its student population by over 18 percent and added a third campus (SFU Surrey) and three new Faculties. The increase in the percentage of international students at SFU has been dramatic, from 5 percent to almost 20 percent of the undergraduate student population, one of the higher proportions among Canadian universities (Curry, 2010). Today, SFU offers over 150 academic and professional programmes and has a student population of 26,000 full-time-equivalent students, including 3,380 graduate students, a faculty and staff population of 2,675, and over 130,000 alumni (SFU, 2015). The university's three campuses are located in the three largest cities in BC. The map in Figure 2 shows the location and proximity of each campus.

Figure 2: Map of SFU's Three Campuses



Source: Map from Google Maps

Simon Fraser University has ranked highly among the 11 Canadian comprehensive universities in *Maclean's Magazine's* annual survey of Canadian universities, achieving the

top place in the majority of recent years, including 2014.⁵ A major effort over the past decade has been to increase SFU's research capacity, with a new Faculty in Health Sciences as one element of the strategy. The university quadrupled its research income between 1999 and 2009 and doubled research income per full-time faculty position. In terms of world rankings, the 2014 *Times Higher Education* "100 Under 50" ranks SFU as 24th overall among the world's youngest institutions (6th in North America and 2nd in Canada). In the QS World University Rankings 2013-14, SFU is ranked 12th in Canada, 67th in North America, and tied with Dalhousie University for 244th in the world (SFU VP Research, 2014).

In addition to the major expansion that took place between 2002 and 2010, a significant advancement was the new institutional mission, announced in 2012, to "become Canada's most community-engaged research university", with a commitment to engaging students, engaging research, and engaging communities. A community engagement strategy finalized in 2013 builds on a long history of community outreach through continuing studies, distance learning, and teacher education programmes. The influence of the positive example of the Surrey campus's engagement with its community had been acknowledged by the university president, who praises it for encouraging this new mission.

Table 6 compares and contrasts the two cities and campuses.

⁵ *Maclean's Magazine's* definition of *comprehensive university* is a university offering a wide range of programmes at the graduate and undergraduate levels and conducts research but does not have a medical school (Simon Fraser University (SFU) Media and Public Relations (2014, 29 October).

Table 6: Engagement Barriers and Facilitators

Factor	SFU Burnaby	SFU Surrey
University history and mission	<p>Geographically isolated with its mountaintop location</p> <p>Rationale for creation was to expand university access and complement programmes of established university</p> <p>Community outreach through continuing studies and cooperative education</p>	<p>Established as urban university, embedded in an emerging city centre and mixed-use facility co-located with retail and private and public sector organizations</p> <p>Established to serve a region challenged by low access to post-secondary education and to provide access to research</p> <p>Engagement of campus in economic development articulated in campus mission and publicity</p>
University complexity, boundaries, and boundary spanners	<p>15,755 undergraduate and 2,961 graduate students</p> <p>Full range of programmes from all eight Faculties</p> <p>No continuing studies programming</p> <p>Main contact the government relations director</p>	<p>2,747 undergraduate and 611 graduate students</p> <p>Selected programs oriented towards professional areas (Engineering, Computing, Business, Interactive Arts & Technology)</p> <p>Continuing studies programming</p> <p>Executive Director assigned as city liaison</p>
City's position and economic strategy	<p>Peripheral city with articulated economic strategy that does not identify role for SFU or other institutions</p>	<p>Peripheral city with articulated economic strategy that includes industry formation and identifies SFU as partner in several areas</p>
Political environment	<p>Long-serving mayor and councillors. Neutral towards SFU</p>	<p>Long-serving mayor until recently and many long-term councillors who champion SFU</p>

Sources: Weerts & Sandmann (2008); Gunasekara (2004); Curry (2011); Curry (2010)

4.2 Local Governments in BC

The two local governments chosen for the case study are the City of Burnaby and the City of Surrey, the second and third largest cities in BC. In Canada, each province is responsible for creating its own system of local government⁶, and local government serves as an administrative extension of the provincial government as well as a mechanism by which local residents can take collective action (Bish & Clemens, 2008). There are nine types of local governments in BC, with the 160 municipalities in the province serving about 87% of the population. Burnaby and Surrey are classified as cities based on populations exceeding 5,000. Burnaby incorporated in 1892 as a district municipality and became a city in 1992. Surrey became a city in 1993 (website: <http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/pathfinder-restructure.htm>).

Municipalities operate under the Community Charter, which recognizes them as an order of government within their jurisdiction. This recognition is unique in Canada and enables municipalities to provide a wide variety of services to respond to their community's needs. Since 1998, the Community Charter has required the provincial government to consult with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities on any legislation that would affect local governments, with the exception of schools (Bish & Clemens, 2008).

Municipalities in BC have flexibility as to how and what services are provided and how revenue is generated to finance operations through the property tax system and user fees for service. Education (schools, colleges, universities, and institutes), health care, and social assistance are provincial responsibilities. Cities and other local governments can provide mandated functions such as police and fire protection, and there are over 250 possible voluntary functions including economic development (Bish & Clemens, 2008).

⁶ *Local government* is defined as a government other than the provincial or federal government that has jurisdiction over a defined territory, is governed by a body of locally elected public officials, and has the power under provincial legislation to impose property taxes whether directly, indirectly, or conditionally" (Bish & Clemens, 2008, p. 5).

Cities in BC are increasingly interested in economic development, but the current level of investment and capacity is generally low.⁷

Phillips (in Howard *et al.*, 2010) states that the pronounced divide between right and left has been a defining feature of BC politics for decades. Unlike other provinces, BC's polarized party system, which has existed for decades, utilises ideological and class-based appeals to the electorate with powerful influence exercised by business groups and trade unions. The two dominant parties are the New Democratic Party and the Liberals and both are not affiliated with the federal political parties.

Each municipality has a democratically elected body that is accountable to its electorate. In BC, political participation of the councils of the municipality in provincial politics varies (Bish & Clemens, 2008). The Burnaby Citizen's Association (BCA) "has dominated civic politics in British Columbia's third largest city for nearly forty years" (Bramham, 2015, p A5) and the current mayor has been in power for 28 years. In the past two decades, BCA has taken every council and school board seat. BCA received almost half of its 2014 party donations from unions and is affiliated with the provincial New Democrat Party (Bramham, 2015). In Surrey, a very prominent mayor served three terms and in 2014 stepped down to stand as a candidate for a federal political party. The Surrey First Coalition has also been dominant over the past two terms (the entire slate was elected in the 2014 election) but, in contrast to the situation in Burnaby politics, the Surrey First coalition has no provincial party affiliation.

Both Surrey and Burnaby have a mayor and eight councillors that make the major policy decisions. In Burnaby, councillors do not exercise administrative supervision over departments but instead each councillor is appointed as a liaison with an administrative department. Council also makes appointments to several internal committees, and

⁷ According to a 2009 survey of local governments (UBCM, 2010) 82 percent have an economic development function, 53 percent have an economic development plan (71 percent of those with a population of over 50,000), and one third of local governments have an economic development officer. Most local governments have a modest but growing allocation of resources to economic development, relying on voluntary committees. The priorities for their efforts include retaining and attracting businesses and investing in hard strategic infrastructure, including recreation facilities, parks, and civic and arts centres.

councillors are appointed to external bodies. The city council mostly supports the recommendations of the staff in comparison to other cities according to those interviewed. Burnaby is represented as having a “weak mayor” system in which the mayor exercises leadership but for policymaking purposes is another member of council. However, those close to Burnaby city operations, observe that the long-serving mayor has a major influence as is the case with the mayor in Surrey.

4.2 Profile of Burnaby and Surrey

To conclude this chapter, in the table below, the major demographic and economic factors are summarized for the cities of Burnaby and Surrey. In the remaining chapters, the findings of my analysis of each city–university collaboration case study will be presented. The analysis identifies factors influencing the evolution of the relationship and assesses interface structures and management processes.

Table 7: Profile of SFU’s Host Cities

Municipality	Burnaby	Surrey
Population (2011)	223,218	468,251
Avg. annual growth rate (2006–2011)	10.1%	18.6%
Percent of population age 20 and below (2011)	19.8%	26%
Share of Metro Vancouver population (2011)	9.6%	19.5%
Avg. family income (2011)	\$61,023	\$60,168
Jobs per resident worker (2006)	1.30	0.69
Foreign-born residents (2011)	50%	41%
Business tax base (% of overall base) (2010)	\$98,202,458 (52.2%)	\$65,779,849 (31.5%)

Municipality	Burnaby	Surrey
Population 20 years & over with university degree (2006)	29.5%	16.4%
SFU student population resident in city (2013)	6,387 (21.3% of total)	4,373 (14.6% of total)
SFU faculty & staff resident in city (2013)	1,705 (25.3% of total)	478 (7.1% of total)
Public University and colleges	British Columbia Institute of Technology SFU Burnaby	Kwantlen Polytechnic University SFU Surrey
City departments	Engineering; Finance; Corporate Services; Planning and Building; Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services; Fire; and Police. Parks and Recreation Commission and the Burnaby Public Library Board are relatively autonomous executive bodies	Engineering; Finance and Technology; Fire Services; Legal Services; Parks, Recreation & Culture; Investment and Intergovernmental Affairs; Planning and Development; and Human Resources. The Surrey Public Library Board and RCMP report directly to the mayor and council with a dual reporting line to the city manager

Sources:

Census Canada 2011

Local Government Tax Rates and Assessments 2010, Ministry of Community Sport & Cultural Development (www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/infra/tax_rates/tax_rates2010.htm)

SFU Institutional Research and Planning (Table ST-26)

City of Burnaby and City of Surrey websites

Chapter Five: The City of Burnaby–SFU Collaboration



Figure 3: Siting of SFU Burnaby campus on Burnaby Mountain
(Photograph by David Ashcroft)

5.1 The Evolution of the Relationship

This chapter details the almost fifty year history of the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship. After a discussion of the four phases in the history of the relationship, I identify the key themes and factors that archival research and the perspectives of interviewees suggest have influenced the collaboration. The chapter will end with an assessment of the processes and structures used to support the relationship.

Four phases are identified based on document review:

Phase One, 1963–1980: Hopeful Beginnings. Establishing the Rules of Governance

Phase Two, 1980–1990: A Period of Calm Co-existence with Occasional Cracks

Phase Three, 1990–1994: Emergence of the Major Land Use Issue

Phase Four, 1995–Present: Return to the Peaceful Parallel Universe

5.1.1 Phases in the Relationship and Key Incidents

5.1.1.1 Phase One, 1963 to 1980:

Hopeful Beginnings. Establishing the Rules of Governance

Though perhaps not generally appreciated as of yet, the contribution of the university in shaping Burnaby's future character and physical development could be profound: it is potentially the most important single development to be proposed in this Municipality. The extent to which its long-term physical and economic benefits to Burnaby will materialize will depend in large measure upon Burnaby's ability to plan and work for the best possible relationship between the university and a major land segment of the Municipality. (*Burnaby Advertiser*, 1963, p. 1)

In 1963, when the Province of British Columbia decided to build a second university, the then District of Burnaby vied with other municipalities to have the university located in their community. Delta, Surrey, Coquitlam, and Langley were the other communities in the running, and most offered 800 acres as a site for the university. Johnston (2005) suggests that the first SFU chancellor, Gordon Shrum, used these other bids to coax increasingly larger offers of acreage from Burnaby and its reeve, Alan Emmott. From an initial offer of 200 acres, the donation was increased to 1,050 acres⁸ to clinch the deal. The main factors that led to the choice of this location included the size of the population that could be served within 30 minutes driving time (Johnston, 2005; *Burnaby Advertiser*, 1963) and the status and significance of the mountaintop location. The location was seen as comparing favourably with the beautiful Point Grey campus of the University of British Columbia (UBC), then the sole university in the province. According to Johnston (2005, p. 41), the "unsurpassed grandeur" of the Burnaby summit outweighed the negatives, including the cost of developing access to the campus.

The Corporation of the District of Burnaby's Planning Report (1963) outlined the various site options and assessed the benefits before concluding the superiority of the Burnaby Mountain site: "On this site and possibly only here could the university excell [sic] the Point

⁸ According to Johnston (2005), Burnaby donated 1,000 acres, the provincial government provided 250 acres of Crown land, and developers added 18 acres. "Shrum made sure that the natural surroundings would be protected. His deal with Burnaby included zoning restrictions on the slopes of the mountain" (Johnston, 2005, p. 42).

Grey university campus in natural amenity and have an immediate opportunity to achieve unique stature with a campus of unsurpassed grandeur, distinction and significance.”

The press reports and the above-mentioned Burnaby staff report outlined the positive impact of the university’s location in Burnaby:

In the well-known shape of the economic snowball, the university will promote so much additional development in Burnaby, that it will become virtually impossible to decide what growth would have occurred with the passing years, and what projects would have never been attempted without the stimulus of the university.” (Mabell, 1965a)

The District identified a number of reasons for wanting the campus to be located in their community including further development of Burnaby, enhanced land values (including residential and industrial to offset the cost of servicing the university site), the promotion of park development, and the direct impact of wages of staff and faculty and revenue to local retail and service businesses on the Burnaby economy. While the Corporation of the District of Burnaby’s Planning Report (1963) acknowledged that the Burnaby Mountain site might be seen as in direct conflict with a park classification and plans for a metropolitan park, District staff pointed out the deficiencies with the Burnaby Mountain site given that it did not enjoy a major water feature and would be unlikely to have extensive or intensive use. Developing a university was seen as a way to attract the public in all types of weather. As the Report suggested, “rather than alienating the public use of Burnaby Mountain Park, use of the ridge for the University offers an opportunity to better exploit its primary park asset—its view potential” (p. 21).

What was not considered at the time was the other benefits of a university: “What they didn’t see, because many people didn’t see until decades later, because it was a new concept, was the idea of knowledge generation and the knowledge economy as something of considerable economic importance to the local community. That wasn’t the way universities were looked at, that was an idea that didn’t really emerged until probably as late as the ’90s” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014).

In a speech at the opening of Simon Fraser University (Mabell, 1965a), Burnaby Reeve Alan Emmott made reference to the provincial good served by the university: “We look forward to the many benefits the university will bring to the educational facilities of our

province. . . . Simon Fraser University has captured the imaginations of all our Burnaby citizens, and of all the citizens of BC.” An editorial in the same newspaper article highlights SFU as “Reeve Emmott’s Living Memorial”, given that he was seen as the man who proposed the Burnaby Mountain location and sold the idea to the council and his civic officials: “Despite a few public outcries at the time, the gift may yet prove the most fruitful since the Trojan horse” (Mabell, 1965b). The editor points out that the development of the entire mountaintop was “a master-stroke of imagination”, as Burnaby would gain more than would have been obtained “from the piecemeal sale of inaccessible mountain-top land, unserviced, and precipitous”, especially given engineering challenges. An SFU representative (unattributed, pers. comm., 2014) downplayed the value of the Burnaby Mountain land: “There was general sense of Burnaby Mountain was junk. It wasn’t Stanley Park [well-known Vancouver tourist attraction].”

While all parties appeared to celebrate the location and the university’s opening, there were some complaints that the province had exerted great pressure and that not all Burnaby representatives were in agreement. (“Shrum always got what he wanted. . . . Yeah, [it] will be wonderful [to] have the university in the city. But of course it’s on the top of a mountain, so it’s not in the city. The City took a positive position for sure. But I don’t think they were completely enchanted with the idea [of] that university being plunked here” (Past President 2, pers. comm., 25 April, 2014).)

After the excitement of the decision about the location and the opening of the campus, the early files of the SFU President’s Office and searches of the local newspaper archives do not reveal a great deal of interaction between SFU and the District of Burnaby. This was substantiated by one of the interviewees, who commented, “I know that Burnaby tried hard to get the university there and gave them the land, and there were other municipalities that wanted it but after I think that competition was over, then Burnaby just went on its way” (Former President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014).

The same former SFU representative commented that the university was content with the distanced relationship: “We had a university community up there that was really quite parochial and isolated. They were very happy to be on top of the mountain” (Former President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014).

Among the possible reasons for the lack of interaction was a perception that the university was primarily serving students from other cities and provinces. It was expected that students of Burnaby would be served by SFU, although only one of every three Burnaby high school students chose to enter SFU over UBC (Johnston, 2005). The early days of protests at Simon Fraser University are well documented in Johnston (1995). One might question whether the lack of relationship was due not just to the location on a mountaintop or the socioeconomic distance but to the frequent protests and controversies of a “radical university”, which caused the community to be less involved. An early Simon Fraser University staff member thought this might be the case: “I guess society in general was thinking, these ingrates at Simon Fraser were getting an education and look at how they’re acting” (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, pers. comm., 18 August, 2014). However, Reeve Emmott appeared to be very understanding about the situation. In a letter dated March 27, 1968, to the SFU president, Dr McTaggart-Cowan, he comments on the high regard he has for President McTaggart-Cowan and provides words of support: “University life has never been placid and perhaps the time to worry would be when university life were bland and unimaginative. . . . Surely the basic purpose of a liberal education is the stimulation of forthright expression in the hope that there will be realized the greatest potential of human intelligence.”

The emergence of the governance and accountability issue. Questions about governance and accountability were raised very early in the existence of the university. The District of Burnaby refused to issue a building permit for a gas service station at the university. A letter dated May 10, 1966, from the university’s law firm confirmed a legal opinion that SFU was not subject to the zoning provisions of the District of Burnaby, although it was recognized that “the point is not clearly resolved in the statutes. There are arguments to be made on both sides.” Letters from 1967 clarify the SFU Board of Governors’ position that university property was not subject to municipal taxation, with the SFU president concluding:

I suggest that we reaffirm the original understanding we had, so that we may close our files on this matter and proceed with discussing the many ways in which the intellectual resources of the University may be used to the benefit of the Municipality who, through their generous gift of a large portion of the land now comprising our campus, made us welcome and led to the establishment of the University in Burnaby rather than elsewhere in the lower mainland.

On February 3, 1970, there was an early warning shot of the land and land use issue, which would become the most significant issue in the university–city relationship, coming to a head in the early '90s. In a letter dated February 3, 1970, Municipal Manager H. W. Balfour wrote to SFU President K. Strand, stating he had been directed by Council to discuss the matter of assessing the actual needs of the university and redefining university boundaries to return redundant property to the municipality for park development. B. R. Wilkinson, Parks and Recreation Administrator, put forth the request in a 1970 letter to SFU President Strand. Burnaby's intent was to develop a system of walking and equestrian trails to preserve natural amenities in a rapidly growing urban area and enhance municipal control of watercourses and facilitate their conservation. Burnaby also wished to provide a buffer between areas of differing land-use zoning and add close-to-home outdoor recreational opportunities for the public.

At a 1976 Burnaby council meeting, SFU's lawyer presented a request to exempt the SFU campus from proposed zoning bylaws that would change the institutional zone to a parks and public use district. The university's lawyer, Sholto Heberten, argued: "No one has bothered to pursue that question in BC. Who gets to control the campus, we or the municipality? We believe we are not bound by zoning but we've gone through the process of obtaining development permits for our buildings" (*The Vancouver Sun*, 1976). This presentation was made shortly after the chairman of SFU's Board of Governors was sent a letter from the Burnaby Parks and Recreation Commission in which the writers intended to "go on record as being opposed to any further development of the semi-wilderness area for car parking purposes".

The university's questioning of Burnaby's authority through the Municipal Act and reaffirmation of the position that SFU was not subject to Burnaby zoning provisions as a result of the Universities Act would continue into at least the mid-nineties. Simon Fraser's retired University Architect explained the position and process as follows:

...[Burnaby staff] have the skills and the people who can administer the building code and so we voluntarily went along with the process of them rubber stamping our preliminary permit process. . . . if it ever came down to a test, which nobody really wanted to do because no one was prepared to lose, [the result] would basically turn on the [following] issue: is what Burnaby trying to impose us in contradiction to our core business as an academic institution? If it was something like trying to put a

convenience store in a student union building, they'd probably win. But if they were trying to stop us putting classrooms somewhere, the Universities Act would probably trump. But we never got there. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014)

A long-time City of Burnaby representative also spoke of the early tensions:

[T]hat all got ironed out after a bit of headbutting at the early days, and I think SFU said, "Well, we'll ask for permits and we'll do zoning and long as it doesn't just totally block what we want to do", and the City said "Okay, and we know you are doing this on a voluntary basis so we won't try and be heavy handed, we'll try and steer you or guide you" or, you know, shape it so that it makes sense for the City as well as making sense for SFU. (City Manager 1, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014)

The working relationship became established, though with the submission of every major project for review, the university included a letter stating, "[W]e are [submitting the project] voluntarily just as a matter of putting on record that we are not obliged to do" (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014). A few City of Burnaby staff members referenced slight irritation at the university's approach: "I'd say it [the relationship] was a good one at all times when the university wasn't waving this flag and saying, 'Hey we don't really have to do this, you know.' . . . That became a little tiresome" (Past Senior City Staff, pers. comm., October, 2014). Another city representative added: "This big long cover your ass, you know. We're doing this but not out of any sense of obligation. So I knew that it was an irritant, at least at the staff level. And there was really a lack of interest at the council level in doing anything" (Former City Councillor, pers. comm., 23 October, 2014).

During the mid-seventies, there were a number of possible joint opportunities. These included a possible cooperative recreational construction project (letter dated February 26, 1975, from G. Stuart, VP Administration to the Corporation of Burnaby), involvement in a proposed convention, recreational, and cultural centre in Burnaby (letter dated May 27, 1977, from George Stuart to Melvin Shelley, Municipal Manager), and a second campus location in Burnaby as part of the civic library building in Metrotown (memo dated November 12, 1974, from G. Stuart). These opportunities were not realized. In the case of the cooperative recreational construction project, after 12 months of various staff meetings

and discussions, the response on June 12, 1975, was a negative one, citing commitments to other playing fields.

In the early period, most of the correspondence between Burnaby and SFU appeared to occur between the city's planning department and SFU's Vice-President, Administration, and Director of Physical Plant & Planning. The first formal joint committee, a Liaison Committee, was established in 1974, almost 10 years after the university opened. The committee consisted of staff members from the city and SFU. (The Burnaby city manager suggested certain SFU representatives, and the Vice-President, Administration, G. Stuart, made other suggestions in an internal memo dated September 27, 1974.)

The '70s closed on a productive and positive note. In 1979, the City of Burnaby supported the creation of a Discovery Parks research site on Burnaby Mountain with a zoning change to accommodate the intended use.

5.1.1.2 Phase 2: 1980 to 1990: A Period of Calm Co-existence with Occasional Cracks

Correspondence and media clippings from the decade of the '80s show a continued period of peaceful co-existence with an understanding of the benefits of some level of collaboration between the city and the university. However, tensions over governance continued, and a related disagreement arose over who should provide financial support for particular projects or services. An undated memo to President K. Strand from G. Stuart outlines various parcels of land and makes it evident that the parties were not aware of all of the agreements concerning land exchange and eventual use of the originally donated lands. The memo also raises concerns about the financial responsibility of the provincial government. Burnaby's view was that a large part of the responsibility for financing would rest with the province, including the cost of access roads. In 1980, there was also contention about who was to pay for fire services at SFU and Discovery Parks. ("Burnaby's position is that they will not agree to zoning unless we agree to pay at least a portion of the cost" (letter dated August 12, 1980, from George Stuart, SFU VP Administration to E. George Pederson, President).) In 1987, the university also ran into opposition from Burnaby Council regarding a proposed residential/commercial village project (D'Andrea, 1991).

It was in this period that the city and university first appeared to formalize a liaison committee that included elected councillors and staff from Burnaby. University President K. George Pederson also expressed interest to the mayor of Burnaby, Dave Mercier, in arranging for the organizations to get together on an informal basis to share issues and concerns (letter dated October 17, 1980). The response was positive (October 22, 1980), and referencing the challenge of meeting for lunch, Mercier wrote, "We could benefit from a discussion on mutual concerns in conjunction with the informal dinner meetings." George Stuart, SFU Vice-President Academic, then sent a letter to K. George Pedersen dated October 29, 1980, that begins, "You realize that we have a Liaison Committee already with the municipality and, therefore, we are going to have to be careful that our efforts are not duplicated. Having said that, I think your idea of getting together with Council is excellent." This was likely in reference to the liaison committee of staff members that was established in 1974.

A review of correspondence during this time period also makes evident a number of positive attempts to cooperate. Correspondence discusses a co-operative agreement for the development and sharing of recreation facilities and advertising programmes to increase opportunities for the Burnaby and SFU communities (letter dated November 19, 1980, to Roy Parkinson, Chairman, SFU Board of Governors, from B. D. Leche, Deputy Municipal Clerk). The areas of common interest were identified as facility accessibility, promotion of recreation services, and cost sharing of future mutually beneficial facilities (including sport fields, squash and racquetball courts, and an ice rink). It is not evident whether this agreement was acted upon. In 1981, in presenting a tartan banner to Burnaby, President Peterson commented: "Simon Fraser University is particularly keen to ensure that whatever resources we have as an institution become available to the community at large, and to the province as a whole, and hopefully to the nation as well. We clearly cannot do that without a great deal of assistance on the part of the municipality." Pederson references the land donation of 1963, writing, "Well, obviously that was a major contribution, and the University is forever indebted for that kind of gift, but in addition to that, we continue to enjoy a tremendous amount of assistance and support", after which he listed a number of areas of cooperation including the development of a research park, joint use of recreational facilities, assistance with housing problems for students and faculty, and transportation. "We wanted you to know on this occasion how much we have appreciated that cooperation and assistance and help" (presentation to

Burnaby Council by President Pedersen and Paul Cote, SFU Chancellor). The mayor of Burnaby in turn sent a note after the event to indicate that the city had adopted the Fraser tartan and crest as Burnaby's own "to signify the close attachment we wish to continue with our University. You personally have created a most positive influence of your University on our community and we very much like that trend" (August 5, 1981 memo from Burnaby Mayor Mercier to SFU President K. G. Pederson).

The university president attended council meetings periodically, such as that of September 13, 1982, during which he provided best wishes for the 90th anniversary of the incorporation of Burnaby as a district municipality, stating: "Simon Fraser University is proud to be located within the Municipality of Burnaby. There has always been a very good working relationship between Council and the University" (meeting minutes of September 13, 1983, council meeting).

Later in the 1980s, there were other examples of support, including SFU's endorsement of a new proposed Burnaby arts facility and Burnaby's invitation to SFU representatives to sit on advisory committees. Almost all of the interactions, with a few ceremonial exceptions, were focussed on the land and its development. The first departure from this theme was the city's appointment of an SFU representative as a member of an advisory committee formed to develop an economic development strategy for Burnaby. While a positive step at inclusion, the development of this strategy resulted in a sense of frustration on the part of the university. The decade of the 1980s closed with questions about how the municipality perceived SFU's value, which were triggered by the narrow role attributed to SFU in the initial draft of Burnaby's economic development strategy. Robert Anderson, Chair of the Steering Committee of SFU's Community Economic Development Centre, was an invited member of the task force the Burnaby mayor formed to develop the strategy. The education sector was highlighted in an initial strategy to strengthen Burnaby's role as a major centre of education. The strategy also contained a recommendation to encourage the development of a university or college branch campus in Metrotown, a growing area of Burnaby serviced by SkyTrain. In a memo to President Saywell, Anderson comments that SFU is highlighted in the strategy but admits that the range of SFU's activities is not well understood. President Saywell's reply on August 10, 1989, is blunt: "They have absolutely no appreciation whatsoever of the significance of the University to the municipality." He also mentions the Metrotown campus recommendation and states, "I would be very

surprised if any of my colleagues were at all interested in establishing a branch university campus at Metrotown.”

Despite this response, on February 13, 1990, Jack Blaney, Vice-President for SFU at Harbour Centre, in a letter to Tony Parr, Director of Planning, requested a proposal for an arrangement of space for SFU at Metrotown. Jack Blaney, who helped to establish the Harbour Centre campus in Vancouver in 1989, appeared to have taken a lead role in liaising with the City of Burnaby some months earlier, and he joined the SFU president at a meeting with the city council. The meeting produced recommendations that SFU better document the relationship with Burnaby and that SFU form a presence in Metrotown. The recommendations included a general statement that “there probably needs to be a better use of SFU expertise by Burnaby, and the University needs to be more a part of the Burnaby mainstream” (memo from Jack Blaney to Ken Mennell dated July 17, 1989).

The 1990s closed with attempts by SFU to encourage the city to recognize its value and provide greater support. In the late 1980s, SFU prepared a study entitled “The Economic Impact of Simon Fraser University”. It is not clear whether this report was intended to encourage the city to recognize the university’s contribution or to support the university’s case with the provincial government, but the latter is likely. The memo from Jack Blaney to President Saywell dated December 22, 1988, suggests sending a copy of the report to the Burnaby mayor to provide evidence for the “very direct role in the economic well-being of our local area”. According to one interviewee, the report was shown to Mayor Doug Drummond, who was surprised by the extent of the impact (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014). Later that year, President William Saywell sent a letter describing examples of the investment of other municipalities in university projects (June 15, 1989).

5.1.1.3 Phase Three, 1990 to 2000: Emergence of the Major Land Use Issue

One of the most remarkable one[s] is the one in 1970 where the municipal manager sends Strand a letter saying they want to get together to discuss, I forget how he put it, jointly assess the university’s needs. Well, hang on a minute. (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014)

A theme in the late '80s that carried over into the early '90s was the university's uncertainty about whether Burnaby understood the value of SFU to the municipality. A letter from Bob Anderson to President Saywell dated August 15, 1991, opens, "I conveyed to you the prevailing impression I gained at the time that SFU's work, and economic contributions to Burnaby, were scarcely known, not to speak of understood" (letter from Bob Anderson, August 15, 1991). Commenting on a request for assistance for the Burnaby Centennial Project in a letter dated August 28, 1991, President William Saywell observes, "It seems to me that we are making an extremely large contribution in terms of talent, time, and dollars, to a municipality which, so far, has not even extended me the courtesy of a reply to the meeting we had with them concerning land disposition. Hardly puts me in a frame of mind to give it any thought at all that would be even remotely positive."

The first public sign of what appears to be the most significant issue or critical incident in the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship, the Burnaby land issue, was the request dated April 6, 1990, from the administrative officer of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission, which is independent of the city council. There may have been other positions that were "below the surface" (unattributed, pers. comm., 2014), and it is not known whether the administrative officer was operating with the support of the mayor and council. The letter included an approved notice of motion encouraging SFU to return university lands outside of the ring road surrounding the Simon Fraser University campus precinct to the Municipality of Burnaby in time for the lands to be included in the park dedication bylaw that would be put before the electorate in November of that year. The response from President Saywell in a letter dated April 30, 1990, explained, "Universities are among the world's longest-lasting institutions which will be here for several hundred years. Therefore, we must assess very carefully how best to fulfil our mandate of teaching and research for the benefit of society. That being the case, we do not see an early decision related to the dedication of our land for purposes other than those which assist us in fulfilling our mandate." He assured the administrator that SFU would be sensitive to the environment and that he held out hope that some of the land on Burnaby Mountain could be dedicated for conservation purposes, though he did not specify which land.

The issue carried over into 1991, a year that ended with media reports of "Relations strained, and not improving" (Marziali, 1991d). Referencing the impasse, reporter Guido Marziali wrote, "The mayor and council refuse to give an inch while SFU refuses to

acknowledge Burnaby's authority. . . . No university is an island, however, not even SFU, perched on top of a mountain." While SFU was accountable only to the provincial government due to the University Act, the university "refused to acknowledge Burnaby's authority" or "interference" . Informal proposals to build market housing and a golf course or for Burnaby to buy the land from the university were met with a hostile response from the council, with Councillor Copeland asking, "Why should the municipality of Burnaby have to bear the cost burden of funding SFU?" Midway through 1992, a few other negative incidents occurred. The university did not report a 45-minute leak of 500 gallons of boiler water containing at least two chemicals into a local creek despite being required to do so by law. The media suggested that this was not SFU's first spill or first unreported spill (*The News*, 1992b).

Media clippings and correspondence mention the pressure third party groups placed on the city council, SFU, and the provincial government. In particular, Dean Lamont, president of the Burnaby Mountain Preservation Society, was very active in advocating for the return of land for park and recreational purposes. Steve Mancinelli also led a crusade to save Burnaby Mountain (Marziali, 1991c), condemning SFU for allegedly destroying the forest (*The News*, 1992a). The public's growing acceptance of the environmental issues was felt to have an influence on Burnaby's position (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014). An SFU representative interacting with a Burnaby council member recalls the following comment: "I'm warning you, I don't want to see towers from my office window up on the top of that mountain. That top of that mountain has got to be trees. . . . Burnaby was turning green. . . . [T]he green activist could be an irritation to the city [and to the] the engineering department or planning. . . . They have to sort of make sure they've got their green politics right" (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014).

Despite these major issues, there were examples of positive joint involvement between SFU and Burnaby in these years, although on a minor scale. The university participated in Burnaby-led events and initiatives including Burnaby's Centennial in 1992 and supported a public forum on the future of the municipality and the creation of a photo image bank (*The News*, 1992c).

The final trigger for the land dispute was the letter from the Burnaby mayor outlining the council's wish to have the entire conservation area given back to Burnaby ("Meeting

Requested”). The council’s public demand resulted in a letter that contained “a terse reply” from President Saywell: “The absence of consultation concerning your new strategy was definitely a surprise and, consequently, disappointing to say the least.” Saywell “scolded Council for its arbitrary and unilateral action” (Marziali, 1991b). Saywell suggested that the relationship had been satisfactory until this point: “I had hoped that the relationship between the municipality and the university had progressed enough to ensure that communication was a hallmark at all stages of planning” (“Meeting Requested”).

One Burnaby reeve had encouraged the university and province to look elsewhere for growth. “SFU should stop worrying about growing outside of the ring road and get behind efforts for a new university further out in the Fraser Valley,” Reeve Rankin is quoted as saying. “As much as SFU is a very important aspect of this community, it’s clear the growth of this campus cannot go unchecked” (*Burnaby Now*, 1991).

From SFU’s perspective, the land outside the ring road presented an opportunity to obtain additional revenue through commercial development (Marziali, 1991d). According to Vice-President of Administration Bill DeVries, SFU was considering allowing commercial development of land to generate income for the university in a challenging fiscal time. For the first time, the university was absorbing a 5% decrease in its operating budget and difficulties in acquiring the capital funding needed to construct new buildings. “Most people in the university environment had no idea how to manage restraint. It was totally unknowing to them. That was the position that Bill inherited, and it had an awful lot to do with the way the university positioned itself” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014). The role of a commercial entity or landlord was new to the university.

Another motive for SFU’s resistance to returning or designating the land was uncertainty about the future (“I don’t know what’s going to happen 30 years from now, 40 years from now, 50, 100,” commented DeVries (Marziali, 1991d).) According to a newspaper article, the community’s or perhaps the city’s perception was that the land wasn’t intended as a trust for the university but to be held in trust for the community (*Burnaby Now*, 1991). The possibility of a “village on the hill” was also part of the vision of the original architect, Arthur Erickson. “The one thing that is really hampering SFU tremendously is not having people living up there. All important universities have live-in populations” (Kirkby, 1994b).

In February of 1992, according to media reports (Marziali, 1992b), Burnaby's council and staff were surprised by reports of large-scale construction at SFU. While in practice, SFU did not need municipal approval for buildings inside the ring road, "Councillors decided Monday they would like to stay abreast of developments on SFU".

Acknowledging that most of the conversations between SFU and the City of Burnaby appeared to occur through the media, on April 1, 1994, SFU held an internal meeting to develop "an effective strategy that will lead to improved relations between the University and Burnaby City". A memo to file from Gregg Macdonald dated April 14, 1994, outlined a five-step strategy developed by the meeting participants. The strategy included intervening with the provincial government to circumvent a parks designation and creation of a university land use plan. In addition to the five steps, five interrelated components of improving relations with Burnaby were proposed. These included Burnaby Mountain recreation facilities (development and access); Metrotown ("SFU satellite campus? High-density student housing?"); and institutional alliances. A major goal was identified: "Begin developing the notion of Burnaby as a community characterized as a centre of excellent, diverse, and inter-related educational resources." It is not clear whether the goal took into account Burnaby's goals and aspirations.

In a letter to Minister of Skills Training and Labour Dan Miller dated July 19, 1994, Gregg Macdonald, SFU Executive Director External Relations, detailed the issues involved in the land dispute and provided several media articles that underlined the tensions. Burnaby maintained that the original transfer was made with the understanding that a majority of the university's property would be returned to the community as park land. The university regarded itself as a provincial institution "whose sense of responsible stewardship and public accountability extends to all communities across British Columbia". The university's hesitation to give back any land was due in part to the long-range need for lands to accommodate additional expansion as well as the use of land as a possible revenue source.

According to the Burnaby Mountain Preservation Society, the municipality had been trying to get the land outside the ring road back since 1975 (D'Andrea, 1991). However, as reported in the same article, the SFU spokesperson, Rick Johnston, Director of Facilities Management, stated that the municipality had never approached SFU about this subject.

The city's perception was that SFU didn't need the lands, as the slopes were too steep for development and there was adequate space within the ring road to double the campus size.

Below are some emotion-laden statements, including those made by the mayor, an alderman at the time, that highlight the tensions. The timeline of the events, in a milestone listing developed by Gregg Macdonald, SFU Executive Director, is provided in Appendix C.

We have climbed the top of Burnaby Mountain and we have seen the enemy and the enemy is Simon Fraser University. (Burnaby Parks and Recreation Commissioner Merrill Gordon, quoted in D'Andrea, 1991)

I've walked on [Burnaby Mountain] with my children and I guarantee you if there's going to be any loss of mountain in future years it's going to be over my dead body. (Alderman Derrick Corrigan, quoted in D'Andrea, 1991)

We've always been prepared to discuss the issue with Burnaby. Burnaby sure has a strange way of discussing things. (Rick Johnson, SFU's director of facilities, quoted in Horn, undated)

States at war have more civil relationships than we do with Burnaby. (attributed to a former SFU president by Former President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014)

Recent proposals for a housing development on the east slope and other uses make the university an untrustworthy landowner. (Alderman Derek Corrigan, quoted in *Burnaby Now*, 1991)

The lack of trust in the university or the province to protect the land was highlighted by the current mayor in an interview: "There was a degree of distrust that was involved in that too and that we didn't believe that either SFU or the province would necessarily protect that land." Worried that the province might see opportunities to expand housing, they decided to make a move to protect the land as a conservation area (Mayor, pers. comm., 18 December, 2014).

Creation of SFU–Burnaby Liaison Committee and resolution of land dispute. A liaison committee that included both staff and elected officials was created in 1980. It was a joint committee George Stuart, VP Administration, proposed to President Petersen (March 7, 1980) and had the following composition:

Municipality: Representative of municipal council, chairman of parks board or designate, municipal manager, member of municipal planning staff

University: Representative of Board of Governors, VP Administration, Director of Physical Plant and Planning, Assistant Director of Physical Plant and Planning

The mayor of Burnaby and the SFU president were ex-officio members and welcome to attend at their convenience. The intent was to meet four times a year or at the call of either party. The purpose of the committee, as identified in the terms of reference, was to “allow for communication on matters affecting both parties with respect to planning, land use, joint development/operations”. Any agreed upon steps would be then taken to existing decision-making bodies such as the university’s Board of Governors or Burnaby’s Municipal Council.

SFU’s Board of Governors approved the Joint Municipality of Burnaby–Simon Fraser University Committee in 1980 (letter dated April 28, 1980 by K. George Peterson, SFU President). The committee membership changed slightly to include Burnaby’s Director of Planning and Parks and Recreation Administrator (or their designates) and SFU’s Director of Recreation, and the terms of reference were revised to include recreation facility development and operation. The village concept was provided as an agenda item for a dinner meeting on May 19, 1981.

According to a long-time city staff member, the committee was intended to serve as a vehicle for informal conversation and establishing rapport: “I think there was certainly from Burnaby’s side of the table . . . the view that things had not been as fluid and as amenable for discussion as [they] ought to be, that there should be a vehicle for closer rapport to be established between the government of the city and the government of the university to make sure they were all on the same track and wanting to achieve the same thing. It seemed like a good idea to provide a vehicle for causal informal conversations to take place” (Past Senior City Staff, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014). There is no evidence found to determine whether this committee persisted beyond the first year or two.

In the late 1980s, President Saywell appeared to request the reemergence of the Liaison Committee, but the request was initially ignored (Marziali, 1991b). When a series of

conversations and positions were communicated through the local newspaper, council members “objected to the increasingly public and confrontational relationship between Council and the University” (Marziali, 1991b). The first written correspondence found dealing with the idea of the committee was a memo written by Louise Morgan to Ken Mennell on November 20, 1991, referring to a lunch conversation between Morgan, an SFU staff member, and Mayor Copeland. Mayor Copeland had advised Ms Morgan that he was appointing a small committee to liaise with SFU “in an endeavour to improve communications between SFU and Burnaby”. Marziali (1991b) reported that the “council half-heartedly agreed Monday to form a committee on the future of the forest”.

Mayor Bill Copeland officially announced the committee at the 1992 inaugural meeting of the council. His stated purpose was “to discuss preservation of the mountain” (*The News*, 1991). A November 15, 1995 memo from the committee to the mayor and councillors confirmed “the intent of the committee was to provide an environment in which representatives of the City and the University could meet and discuss areas of mutual concern and interest in addition to improving communications. The main area of mutual interest was resolution for the ownership and land use issues involving the university properties situated within the Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area.” The current City of Burnaby website defines the mandate of the committee as follows: “The Simon Fraser Liaison Committee liaises with Simon Fraser University on matters of common interest with meeting set at the call of the Chair” (City of Burnaby website).

The correspondence includes a number of indications that Burnaby would delay scheduling meetings of the Liaison Committee. For example, May 26, 1994 correspondence from Gregg Macdonald, SFU Executive Director, External Relations, to Don Stenson, Burnaby Director of Planning, suggests that the former found the delays “perplexing”. Also, a note to John Stubbs from Bill DeVries (not dated) reads: “Rick and I have been trying to get another meeting set up of the Burnaby/SFU Liaison Committee to no avail.” Whether this was an attempt to avoid discussion of issues or a consequence of the perception that the discussion that took place at these meetings had little value is unknown.

The “driving element” in Burnaby’s participation in the Liaison Committee was the wish to see lands returned for conservation (Past Senior City Staff, pers. comm., 28 October,

2014). After a gap of 10 months, on May 10, 1994, the Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee began to meet, and negotiating positions were exchanged during a meeting held in June of 1994. Burnaby land negotiations continued in 1995. A document entitled “Simon Fraser University’s Place in Burnaby” appeared to be a joint agreement on principles meant to serve as a foundation for moving forward on collaborative projects. The principles went beyond the land negotiations and included the following:

- Simon Fraser University and Burnaby jointly will develop a proposal to establish an educational facility and program at Metrotown. (The idea of a Metrotown location was also mentioned in a letter dated October 2, 1995, to Dr Jack Blaney, Vice-President for Harbour Centre, from Councillor Lee Rankin, Chair of the Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee: “As a particular future objective, I would be pleased to be able to announce our mutually embarking on a Metrotown campus for Simon Fraser University!”)
- Simon Fraser University and Burnaby jointly will establish the “Burnaby Program”, an educational program aimed at encouraging interaction between the university and the citizens of Burnaby; enhancing public awareness of Burnaby’s history, accomplishments, and potential; and strengthening Burnaby’s cultural, social, and economic enterprises.
- Simon Fraser University and Burnaby will establish joint working groups to address common concerns such as transportation, economic development, safety and security, and recreation and conservation.

There is no evidence in the limited correspondence or subsequent media coverage that any of these principles were actively pursued.

Negotiations were characterized as positive, and in June 1995, a letter by President John Stubbs was written to Mike Harcourt, Premier of the Province of BC, asking for his assistance in achieving an outcome to the negotiations, specifically a proposed \$20 million endowment. However, behind the scenes, there were many challenges to finding common ground. One interviewee commented on the importance of a local provincial politician as a facilitator: “. . . She is the one that pulled this out the fire. It was that meeting where she said, ‘You guys all got to grow up’ ” (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014).

Persons interviewed from the city and university acknowledged that the city had approached the provincial government. At some point, SFU had suggested that “a ‘gentle’

intervention with Burnaby by the Premier/Province would be helpful” (memo from G. Macdonald). The university realized that they needed to deal with Burnaby:

I don't think it really occurred to the people in the university that we really couldn't do anything without Burnaby. They actually had the upper hand. We may have had the land. But there was absolutely zilch we could do with it unless we had their permission to build an apartment or a townhouse and at what density and all these other kind of things. . . . I think for a long time we lacked the appreciation that Burnaby held the cards. . . . [T]he view of the university was that we could do whatever the hell we liked. And there was kind of arrogance on the part of the university. . . . [W]hen we started to deal with them in a more kind of equal way and respected that they basically had the authority. . . when we finally kind of accepted that then worked on that, I think our relationships were really quite good. (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014)

The eventual agreement to the land issue was applauded by all as “an honourable and mutually beneficial balance of interests in the final outcome” (letter dated October 2, 1995, to Jack Blaney, Vice-President for Harbour Centre, from Councillor Lee Rankin, Chair of the Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee). In this letter, Councillor Rankin also indicated interest in a Metrotown campus for SFU.

The agreement about land ownership and land use on Burnaby Mountain, dated November 30, 1995, included plans for a new dedicated park and recreation area for the City of Burnaby that would consist of 800 acres, with 150 acres remaining inside the ring road for university and related development (*SFU News*, 1995), and the creation of a \$15 million Burnaby Mountain Endowment Fund for academic enhancement and campus development.⁹

The agreement required a development plan by SFU and approval in principle by Burnaby. The agreement attempted to clarify zoning requirements and financial obligations. The university was to be responsible for the provision of appropriate on-site and off-site services and facilities necessary for the development of its lands within the ring road. The university would provide access to university services for non-university tenants without

⁹ The province provided \$5 million Canadian to Burnaby, which then transferred Burnaby-owned lots to SFU for sale to generate an additional \$10 million Canadian.

cost to the city whenever the university was able to provide access. The need for delivery of city services is mentioned as under assessment, but the agreement does not identify which party would bear the financial obligation. The creation of a distinct zoning category for SFU allowed individual buildings to proceed without rezoning, but SFU was still subject to normal preliminary planning approval and building permit requirements (November 15, 1995 memo from the Liaison Committee to Burnaby City Council). The hope was that this long-standing governance issue was now settled.

Explaining the successful conclusion of this long-standing issue or opportunity, one participant commented: “Again it was a matter of trusting each other, knowing each other, having good feelings towards each other” (unattributed, pers. comm., 16 July, 2014). Most of the individuals from the City of Burnaby and SFU considered the settlement of this land issue and subsequent ability to proceed on the village development the critical incident in the relationship.

On the city’s financial commitment with regard to land it had donated originally, the current mayor has come to terms with the idea of buying back land that the city had originally donated:

. . . . ultimately for SFU, the fact that the city is protecting the conservation area takes the responsibility off their shoulders and ends a potential conflict with the provincial government . . . so we think it was a really good deal eventually, even though we bought back the land we gave. (Mayor, pers. comm., 18 December, 2014)

5.1.1.4 Phase Four, 1995 to Present: Return to The Peaceful Parallel Universe

After the land dispute resolution, there appeared to be warm feelings on both sides. In a letter to Premier Mike Harcourt dated November 16, 1995, President Stubbs commented, “It is important that good relations are built between the University and the surrounding community.” In a November 28, 1995 letter to Dr Barbara Copping, elected provincial official for Port Moody-Burnaby Mountain, President Stubbs wrote, “It is critical for a university and its community to have the best of relations and the way forward on this matter was initially to secure a resolution of our long-standing differences over Burnaby Mountain. . . . We can look forward to a much more positive and co-operative future thanks in no small part to your support and counsel.” In a joint letter to SFU’s Board of Governors

and Burnaby City Council dated September 9, 1996, SFU President John Stubbs and Burnaby Mayor William Copeland state, “In the best spirit of positive relations between town and gown, Simon Fraser University and the City of Burnaby have worked in harmony to achieve reciprocal benefits for the University and for the surrounding community. The City and the University look forward to continuing a co-operative relationship for years to come.”

One SFU representative referred to this land swap and the subsequent ability to develop the lands as a very valuable decision for the university. Much of the land outside the ring road would have been extremely expensive to develop. “. . . [B]eing able to do that that may have been the biggest thing we ever needed from Burnaby.” (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, *pers. comm.*, 24 June, 2014)

Despite these warm feelings and the resolution of this major issue, the relationship did not appear to progress. In his interview, a former SFU president comments: “I kind of thought that when the land got turned back, the 700 acres we gave back to them, I thought that might help in various ways. I’m not saying it didn’t help but it didn’t propel us any further. Of course, we gradually came to understand that might have [had] a lot to do with how the land was acquired in the first place” (Past SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014).

There were some attempts by SFU to have greater involvement with the City of Burnaby: “Well we have this centre for community economic development, can it be useful?” (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014). This same staff member also highlighted the “symbolic stuff that [the] mayor came up and president went down and you know was—on these special moments, celebratory moments”. The Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee continued to meet to deal with minor issues. Invitations were issued to councillors to participate in a colloquium to discuss market development of the SFU property on the Burnaby Mountain campus. In 1996, SFU was involved in coordinating a community forum for Environment Week in Burnaby. More significantly, in 2002, two memoranda of understanding were signed to cooperate on research projects and teaching opportunities involving municipal issues. A working group was to be established to review and approve collaborative research projects chaired by an SFU faculty member and a representative from Burnaby Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services (“City of Burnaby and SFU strengthen research ties”). The goal of this research agreement was to ensure

that SFU researchers would have access to the mountain for research but also to encourage ‘life at the right altitude’ (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

Creation of UniverCity. Peaceful co-existence continued throughout the decade after 2000. One interviewee commented: “I don’t recall any issues where we really had to lock horns with Burnaby. I think the locking of the horns [was] a lot less likely given that we had an agreement on how the land is going to be managed” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014). The relationship between SFU’s president and the Burnaby mayor appeared to be a friendly one by all accounts, and the SFU president appeared to put major effort into the relationship with the Burnaby mayor. There were some advocacy efforts with other levels of government, as in the case of a proposed 2010 Olympic speed-skating facility that eventually was awarded to another municipality. The Liaison Committee continued to meet, and staff from each institution dealt with operational issues. Otherwise, interaction was limited.

The most significant and positive incident since the resolution of the land dispute was the creation of a residential community on Burnaby Mountain called UniverCity. The university created its Community Trust to build a community that would generate income from development, create more life and services on Burnaby Mountain, and showcase affordable sustainability. UniverCity has a current population of 3,500 residents and eventually will become a community of between 8,500 and 10,000 residents (UniverCity Community Trust, 2014). The Community Trust is managed by the SFU Community Corporation, which is governed by an independent board of directors that includes SFU representatives, including a faculty and student representative, and external members with expertise in areas such as finance, law, and real estate development (UniverCity website).

Interviewees highlighted the success of UniverCity: “The critical incident was actually a breakthrough when we did the village. And that was [when] we took a different posture. . . . And once there was a different posture . . . there was trust. Frankly, I think the village is a wonderful success. And I think that’s, for me, that’s the critical incident in terms of dealing with Burnaby” (Former SFU President 1, *pers. comm.* 9 May, 2014).

The addition of UniverCity provided an initiative of mutual interest, and UniverCity staff also made an effort to build relationships with Burnaby planning staff. There is some disagreement about whether UniverCity changed the nature of the university's relationship with the city by requiring it to treat the university as a developer. While UniverCity maintains the separate governance of the Trust, when reminded of the arm's-length nature of the early days, city representatives "would just smile [and say], 'Oh yeah, sure, how long is the arm?' " (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

In the following section, the impact of the university on the City of Burnaby will be summarized, and reflections from the personal interviews will be integrated according to key themes that emerged.

5.1.2 Reflecting on the Impact of the University

The positive impact of SFU on the City of Burnaby is acknowledged by both SFU and the City of Burnaby. The fact that the City of Burnaby has one of the highest transition rates from secondary schools to post-secondary education in the province, 66 percent versus the provincial average of 52 percent, is attributed in part to the presence of SFU and the British Columbia Institute of Technology (Burnaby Board of Education, 2008). As of 2014, SFU had 12,145, or 12 percent of its alumni, with primary addresses in Burnaby (Ivana Plesnivý, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014). Over the past 25 years, the percentage of City of Burnaby residents with some level of post-secondary education has increased from 45 percent in 1981 to 57 percent in 2006, and the percentage with university degrees increased from 8 percent to 26 percent over the same time period (City of Burnaby, 2009).

Measuring the impact of SFU's Burnaby campus is challenging. As do many universities, SFU attempts to quantify the economic impact of its campuses through SFU students and visitors in addition to attempting to measure research impact and the earnings of its alumni. The total impact was recently assessed as over \$4.72 billion for 2012–2013, although this impact is not allocated regionally (Sun and Naqvi, 2014).

Along with these tangible results, the mayor acknowledges the impact of SFU's location in Burnaby on the brand or stature of the city: "[U]niversity towns are perceived [as] different....[T]here's something special about a university town and it's always given kind

of a special veneer to a city that they are a university town” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014). SFU’s graduates help to support creativity and innovation: “I came to the conclusion that you don’t attract creativity, you grow creativity ... your interconnections develop in a place and once those things happen, you tend to want to stay close to them, you know you’ve got your comfort zone, so the idea of you leaving and going somewhere else isn’t all that attractive” (Mayor (*pers. comm.*)18th December, 2014). The mayor also valued the level of dialogue and community contributions of faculty and staff: “You also have a lot of people that are working at the university who are adding to the quality of life within your community and the debate within your community.... They have lives as citizens as well as teachers and I think that’s an important aspect that you end up with a more sophisticated community as a result of it” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014).

5.2 Reflecting on the Dynamics of the Relationship

In the interviews with representatives of SFU and the City of Burnaby, they identified a number of factors as having an important impact on the relationship. These factors, will now be described and include:

- Collaboration history
- The gulf between academia and communities
- Uncertainty about university contributions and centrality
- Lack of effort in connecting the city to the community
- Campus location and identity with Burnaby
- Governance and provincial interplay

5.2.1 Collaboration History: Characterizing the Collaboration and the Impact of the Land Dispute

A striking aspect of respondents’ characterizations of the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship is how differently they perceived the health of the relationship depending on when they were involved. University participants involved prior to 2001 describe the relationship as

“not much of a relationship” (Former SFU President 2, pers. comm., 25 April, 2014) and “plenty arm’s length” (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, pers. comm., 24 June, 2014). One interviewee commented, “I was very aware of the nature of the relationship. But there wasn’t much of a relationship” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014), with another former staff person observing: “I don’t recall [that] in the very early days there was a whole lot of relationship between Burnaby and Simon Fraser” (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, pers. comm., 18 August, 2014). A university representative who was active in projects and committees with the City of Burnaby in the 1980s refers to a long-standing distance in the relationship: “*Estranged* is a useful word but it implies that it was once close. . . . I don’t think that the city were close.” He further comments, “I think it wasn’t what you’d call familiar, it wasn’t intimate, but it wasn’t even familiar” (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014).

University interviewees spoke of general indifference: “Burnaby was not particularly interested in working with the University. . . . I don’t think they really cared very much. I mean, they weren’t impolite. . . . Burnaby is kind of an enigma” (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014). Another former president describes the relationship as “iffy”, “always . . . fraught”, and “broken” when he began his term (Former SFU President 3, pers. comm., 7 November, 2014).

While one City of Burnaby representative spoke of the “reluctance” of the relationship (unattributed, pers. comm., 2014), most of the current city staff and elected officials were more positive, although not overly so, in their description of the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship: “I’m struggling . . . to come up with something where I think Simon Fraser could have done more better. . . . [A]ll I have [is] experience which has been very, very positive” (Councillor, pers. comm., 24 October, 2014). Several former staff members used neutral terms such as “cordial” to describe the relationship (Past Senior City Staff, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014). The current city manager summed up the relationship as follows:

...it is a long-term, ongoing, steady, solid working relationship without any dramatic outburst[s] or squabbles or without any dramatic successes, you know, thank goodness SFU did that or thank goodness the city did that. It has been comfortable, peaceful. I don’t think it’s impeded the university in becoming what it wanted to be and I don’t think it’s impeded the city in any way. (City Manager 1, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014)

There has been very little turnover of staff at the city, and representatives from SFU suggested that one possible root cause of the state of the relationship was the original decision to locate SFU on the mountain. There was a belief that the director of planning did not want the university on the mountain but followed the politicians of the day. “He “seemed to have an axe to grind. . . . So that’s where you kind of got off on the rocky foot and nobody seemed to have any great desire to bridge the chasm” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

The more important cause of the current relationship dynamics is the land dispute, despite its successful resolution in the mid-nineties. “Within the bureaucracy of the city, I think there were long memories; [that] would be my guess. And maybe there were blow-ups over some of the things we did up here. . . . there was somebody there who wanted to drag the anchor for quite a while” (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014).

Others referred to the impact of challenging discussions about the land dispute and the proposal to build a village. In the early ’80s, when the university again proposed a university village concept, “the City of Burnaby basically rejected it and killed the whole enterprise, which was much to the university’s dismay. . . . [T]hat just kind of frosted the relationship. I’m not aware of any meetings on any regular kind of basis between the university and the city, that kind of happened later on . . . so it was a mutual ignoring of each other’s political, governmental relationship, which—those of us actually doing things—we knew there was this frosted atmosphere up there” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

The fact that the City of Burnaby in effect purchased land back that was originally donated was a challenge for the city at the time. The current mayor suggests that the city has come to terms with the decision because of the appreciation of land values and the benefit the funds have provided to SFU (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014).

Two senior SFU representatives interviewed were not aware of the original donation of land and thought that the province had expropriated the land. “The Burnaby campus of course was facilitated by Burnaby . . . but that could have been taken away from them [once] the provincial government [decided] to build the university anyway. Once Gordon Shrum decided it was going to be on Burnaby Mountain, it was probably going to be there

whether Burnaby wanted it or not. So, while that was very kind of them, it was probably in a way kind of an enforced or preempted gift” (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, pers. comm., 24 June, 2014). A recent UniverCity publication explains the 1963 siting of the university as “BC government establishes SFU and endows the university with property covering the peak of Burnaby [M]ountain” (UniverCity, 2014). The university’s lack of recognition of the land donation may have been an irritant to the City of Burnaby. The current mayor acknowledged that not all SFU representatives are aware of the donation: “Burnaby donated that land, and we’ve always been well aware of that and bring it up every once in a while” (Mayor, pers. comm., 18th December, 2014).

While the land issue was eventually resolved, trust did not appear to be built in the process: “We’ve said it many ways, but I think neither the city nor the university naturally thought of the other as a partner in much of anything for a very long period of time, and I think you know the legacy of how it all happened, [which] I think was a pretty deep scar in Burnaby. . . . And I guess I would say candidly that I think probably that was the city didn’t trust us a lot given the history” (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014). Burnaby Council might have been seen to “sideswipe SFU by attempting to include two thirds of Burnaby Mountain as [a] green zone”. This was the view of a reporter (Marziali, 1992c), who also suggested that, “Burnaby is attempting to outmanoeuvre SFU and block development of the forest.” The president’s public scolding of the city in the local media likely also contributed to the negative atmosphere.

A number of SFU representatives identified points of frustration that marred the years of negotiation and dealings:

In ’94 there was a meeting in which the two sides agreed to sit down and exchange positions. Burnaby presented no position, so that was typical of them. . . . I had worked out the detailed position that others had agreed to. It was a very difficult meeting, to put it mildly. . . . [W]e were to remeet in June or something after this meeting fell apart. And they were to present their position. Course, they cancelled the meeting. They never did present a position. It was typical of the kind of relationship. It was extraordinarily frustrating dealing with these guys. (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014)

One SFU representative characterized the history and undercurrent to the relationship as follows: “And when he comes, you see . . . he’s stepping [on]to some ice that he’s never

seen before, but underneath it is the legacy of this relationship. . . . [I]t's right there, and he has to find out . . . what was underneath the ice in a place where [he's] never been" (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

One of the barriers to moving forward is the perception of SFU representatives that the relationship is not a positive one. This view is not shared—or at least not communicated—by City of Burnaby representatives: "Stop thinking it's adversarial. So you know how many meetings have you and I sat in and listened to the senior administrators at the university [complain about] Burnaby. Stop it. As long as you do that, you perpetuate it and it's them and us. So we are in this together, we don't have to like the players to want to work together to an outcome that benefits everyone. . . . Break that cycle" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014). "Gee, we got these great relationships, what's wrong with Burnaby? Burnaby is Burnaby you know? [Like the advice to] Jack Nicholson in [the movie] Chinatown, 'Forget it Jack, it's Chinatown.' It's not going to change, so figure out how to work it" (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014). The Burnaby mayor also references a more positive story that is often lost: "There is a history where we work together, but it doesn't get a lot of play. It is more known in-house" (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 30 May, 2011).

5.2.2 Questioning of Recognition of Relationship and Contributions

The question of whether the city appreciates the university is an ongoing theme that surfaced in past correspondence as well as during interviews of SFU participants. The following quotes illustrate this perception and indicate how it has persisted over time:

[T]hey have absolutely no appreciation whatsoever of the significance of the University to the municipality." (memo from SFU President to Chair, Steering Committee, Director of Community Economic Development Centre, August 10, 1989)

So, I don't think in that sense people in Burnaby would necessarily think of the university, well, even to put it crudely, as an asset. . . . I don't sense warm fuzzies about SFU and the Burnaby community. (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014)

There is appreciation by the municipality of the economic and social benefits that the university provides and there certainly some pride associated with that. At the same

time, there is a 'mountain' of disconnect. I find it frustrating given the history that we haven't been able to forge a closer relationship and that the university is not seen more regularly and positively as a community contributor and builder. (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014)

Interviewees from SFU also raised the issue of respect and pride and questioned whether the city values the university by taking more substantive action beyond general statements. "But I never felt that they loved us or were proud of us. And the interesting thing is that they treated BCIT [British Columbia Institute of Technology] the same way," a former president said. However, the same president later stated that, "universities ought not to have the ego, that they ought to be loved" (Former SFU President 1, *pers. comm.*, 9 May, 2014).

When directly asked whether they appreciated the university, the Burnaby representatives responded positively, referring to SFU as part of the "beating heart of Burnaby. . . . It's a mutual interest society" (Past Senior City Staff, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014). Public speeches (Mayor's Burnaby Board of Trade Speech, August 2010) and a recent interview given by the current mayor demonstrate a clear awareness of the role SFU plays in economic development, particularly in fuelling the city with educated, creative people; supporting the city's branding and profile; and establishing spin-off companies (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014). The municipality might also question whether SFU values the city's contributions, especially given the lack of recognition of the original donation of land. In the past, the university has given some recognition to Burnaby mayors in the form of honorary degrees (R.W. Prittie and Alan Emmott in 1979 and 1983, respectively). Upon the passing of past Mayor Doug Drummond, an entrance scholarship was set up to honour the close connection he maintained with SFU throughout his life.

5.2.3 The Gulf Between Academia and Communities

Many SFU representatives described a gulf between the university and the city as well as the Burnaby community and believe that this contributed to the lack of a relationship with the City of Burnaby. This gulf was seen as resulting from the culture of academe and its contrast with Burnaby's proud identification as a working-class community. The conflict was about "class, life ambitions, life-career trajectories. . ." (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers.*

comm., 30 September, 2014). “[The mayor] was very forthcoming, very blunt about how Burnaby felt about the people on the mountain” (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014).

In addition to the class divide, a number of interviewees highlighted other difficulties the city faced in understanding or relating to the university and vice-versa: I think a lot of politicians are uncomfortable in the presence of academics. The tradition . . . which I certainly support is that universities are led by academics [who] do their turn as administrators. And so you’re seen as bit of an exotic creature in the minds of people that you’re dealing with in city hall, even though many of them are more sophisticated and more talented than you are. But there [has] always been this distance, and [though] it’s closing somewhat now, I still think it’s probably a reality in many ways (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014).

The gulf between academe and the community was not seen as unusual or of major concern for the university: “Well, universities are self-important places. I mean the people in universities are very coddled people. But it’s also the good thing about them. . . . This is a place for intellectual discovery and criticism and everything else. That’s what universities do for the community. That’s what [the university] does for democracy. It’s there to critique the kinds of things that we’re doing.” (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014). “I think another limitation is that many universities are not the best partners. They are used running their own show. They are used to being a senior partner. . . . I think that can undermine or contaminate relationships with municipalities. On the other hand, municipalities may not fully appreciate or understand the needs of universities, and that can cause difficulties too” (SFU President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

The City of Burnaby representatives did not directly mention a divide, although some of the phrases and characterizations they used reinforced the gap, as exemplified by the following two quotes: “[It’s] not easy for every peasant to be part of the Olympus” (unattributed, pers. comm., 30 May 2011). “If you are naturally inclined to be academic, you tend to associate with people who come from that kind of background. If you are more inclined to be a people person . . . then you tend to be more interested and engaged in that kind of area” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014).

University representatives discussed the need to fit in and bridge this divide: “[H]e’s a downtown guy you know? They had to learn the culture of Burnaby” (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014). The lack of interaction between the university and the community was an issue: “North Burnaby did have a political power in the city and although . . . they would want their kids or their nieces to go to the university, they themselves . . . maybe have not. . . . People didn’t come up much from the City of Burnaby; there weren’t events to come to much, though there were wonderful place[s] and performances and dance and . . . rich history of interesting things [that are] open to the public. But lots of people in Burnaby never used that or related to that, and they saw [the university] as remote” (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

Some interviewees felt that the situation has improved given the construction of the UniverCity residential development, SFU’s new, more outward-looking mission, and a general trend towards closer university–community connections (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014).

The current Burnaby mayor explains the evolution of SFU’s engagement and evolution: “I think that SFU has looked outwards much more over the past 25 years and they did in their first 25 years. . . . I think they were more insular and more traditionally academic focussed over those years, probably because they are focusing on [their] reputation and building their credibility. When they got a little stronger and felt a little more muscular, they start[ed] looking outside . . . for opportunities, and so I think it’s increased their relationship in other cities” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

5.2.4 Campus Location and Identity with Burnaby

The campus’s location on the top of Burnaby Mountain and at the eastern edge of the city has been felt to have a major impact on the university’s relationship with the City of Burnaby as well as with the Burnaby community: “SFU is in the wrong place, chosen for its expedience at the time. City universities belong in the city—not perched on a mountain, surrounded by forest and cut off from the rest of us. Talk about an ivory tower” (*The Burnaby News*, 1994). The university’s location is characterized as “the most ‘ivory tower’ location among Canadian universities because of its isolation from the immediate urban surroundings” (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, pers. comm., 24 June, 2014).

The location creates a “moat” between the university and the Burnaby community (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014) and is a major impediment to the public’s access to the campus. In addition, given limited visibility, it does not support the university’s identity as a Burnaby institution or Burnaby’s sense of ownership of SFU:

I think the mountain is a barrier here for sure. Most people in Burnaby don’t look at the university physically. I mean, it’s not there. Their Burnaby is a different Burnaby. (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014)

So, I don’t think in that sense people in Burnaby would necessarily think of the university, well, even to put it crudely, as an asset. And I don’t think, to be fair, that historically the university spent a lot of time trying to convince Burnaby that it was an asset. . . . [W]e’re identified as a university in Vancouver or in the lower mainland if you want [a] kind of neutral term. We don’t necessarily identify ourselves very actively with Burnaby. . . . I don’t sense warm fuzzies about SFU and the Burnaby community. (Former SFU president 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014)

How can we bring people/expertise down from the mountain? Unlike the University of British Columbia, there is no specific area where faculty tend to be concentrated. . . . we can’t point to a concentration of SFU students. When you have that, people can say we have a university here. The mountain has become the barrier. [The university] needs to come down off the mountain. (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 30 May 2011)

Leaders of both the City of Burnaby and SFU acknowledge the challenges imposed by SFU’s location:

Putting the university on top of a mountain came at a price for that relationship. . . . A lot of the disconnect between Burnaby and SFU I believe relates to the initial decision to site the university on top of Burnaby Mountain. . . . [I]t’s physically isolated not just from the city but from the Lower Mainland. (SFU President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014)

Universities chase free land. . . . [T]hat isolation is the price you pay for being removed from the centre of cities . . . a short-term decision that has long-term ramifications that change the whole ability of the university to be a dominant part of your urban culture and to be a stimulus for a more urban activity. . . . it’s a battle that SFU has had to fight, this isolation, and they’ve done a good job. (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18th December, 2014)

Having SFU on top of the mountain has deprived our metropolitan centres. By not having you in our centres, Surrey and Vancouver have more of you. That’s the truth. It is an ongoing problem. (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 30 May 2011)

While the challenges of the mountaintop location are evident, there is a need to move forward in a constructive way to get the community up to SFU to use programs and enjoy the view (unattributed, pers. comm., 30 May 2011) and to get out into the community. The mayor acknowledged, “A university is about innovation and creativity. . . . Relevance is not just [made] out of where you put bricks and mortar” (Mayor , pers. comm., 30 May 2011). Having a campus within a community core does not automatically lead to a close connection. Representatives spoke of other universities located within communities that still exist separately from the city and its government, and some reaffirmed the decision to locate SFU on the mountaintop: “I don’t think again anybody is saying, you know, ‘We got screwed’ or, you know, ‘Who was the idiot that did that?’ . . . I think everybody is satisfied with how it’s worked out. . . . [N]obody is sort of saying, ‘Oh gee, if we had to do it over again we sure wouldn’t do that.’ I think if we had to do it over again, we would do it” (City Manager 1, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014).

While almost all interviewees spoke of the challenge of the isolated location, a few commented on the benefits of separation from the community to avoid residents complaining about noise and other disruption. A former university president spoke of the importance of this isolation in enabling room to grow its facilities in its university precinct (Former SFU University President, pers. comm., 7 November, 2014).

5.2.5 Lack of Effort in Connecting to the City and to the Community

Most interviewees thought there was a lack of effort to bridge the academic–city divide and compensate for SFU’s isolated location:

When I came on board, I guess that I was shocked [about] how bad the relationship was. . . . I remember the councillor was telling me ‘Jeez, you know, the only time we ever [see] the university is when they come down off the mountain and want something from us, and once they [get] it, they go up and don’t come back.’ And that was a pretty standard comment that I heard. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, pers. comm., 5 September, 2014)

[Y]our city is an organization of its own. The university is its own. And they should have very respectful relationships. But one ought not to assume that one is better or has more status or whatever. And so we have to work at it. (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014)

The university's isolated location also necessitates a greater effort to connect with the wider community, although there is no indication that the British Columbia Institute of Technology's more urban setting has led it to form a closer relationship with the city. Responding to the city mayor's comment, SFU's president says, "I have always felt that we have a unique and strong relationship. . . . The relationships are strong and productive. It is more self-criticism that there is not the same consciousness in Burnaby of the university as a resource. Post-secondary institutions have an obligation to leverage their capacity to benefit communities and contribute to social capital and betterment. We could do more to connect to average citizens" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 30 May 2011).

Over the years, several SFU presidents have championed greater involvement and attempted to close the gap: "Sometimes it was pointed out to me, people would say is there anything we could do to improve this? I didn't quite want to follow the line of argument that said that no one ever did anything about Burnaby, because I always felt like not only [the university president] but [also the president] before him, did try. . . . I began to think that this has got to stop. . . . I said you've got a huge resource here. People have international reputations. The city suffers from the reputation; it sounds like sort of a suburb where, you know, people live and people pass through, but what's Burnaby's—you know, why don't you make something out of the fact that the [u]niversity is here and it's in—and vice versa?" (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

Finding the most fruitful connections for the university and the community to collaborate appeared to be a challenge as highlighted in an example provided by a former chair of Economics: "I was told that by my predecessor that one of the things that I had to do was to go to meetings at the Burnaby Chamber of Commerce. I remember him saying, 'It comes with the territory.' And so I did this quite religiously: for a year or so, every month I would go to some hotel location and there was a lunch meeting usually with a speaker. . . . And so, I did that for a year. . . . I didn't sense a huge interest [on] the part of the . . . Burnaby Chamber of Commerce members in SFU or particularly in my department, which was the one [that] would have the biggest connection with them" (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, *pers. comm.*, 24 June, 2014).

The university's support for efforts to find and build these connections appears limited:

So I can remember having an early meeting with [Burnaby mayor] . . . he said, “Well you, guys have to get off the mountain. You got to start being involved in the community, you know, you[’ve] got a lot of expertise. . . . [W]e just need to see more of you, basically.”

And that’s when he talked about the Burnaby Board of Trade. . . . So one of the earliest things I did was [get] involved with the Board of Trade. It just made no sense not to do these kind of things, but it just wasn’t on the university’s radar screen; I think it was still to some extent the ‘top of the mountain’ philosophy. . . . [W]e got our zoning, and we let the planners and the people of the university deal with it. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

Despite the desire to connect the City of Burnaby and the community by providing the expertise of faculty and staff, barriers remain to engage faculty: “. . . . And in all fairness, I mean, a lot of people commute. . . . [T]heir world revolves around getting off the mountain at 4:30. . . . I mean, if we’re a university that wants to be part of the community, engaged as [SFU’s current president] has talked about, you have to have boots on the ground. You can’t really do it online or from 9:00 to 5:00” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014).

Sustained university involvement rather than periodic engagement is important to the city: “[Y]ou have to work at it; it’s like any relationship. I mean, the city is very sensitive when you disappear for a while. . . . I wouldn’t say it’s insecurity—that’s too strong of a word—but if [you] go away for a while, there’s a tendency of them to think . . . they don’t really need us anymore. I mean, they’re big institutions and, you know, they are focussed on the province and they are focussed on their internal profit.” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014).

The city representatives also highlighted the lack of joint activities and community engagement in a meeting in 2011: “[Simon Fraser University] hasn’t aggressively pursued getting out into the community and letting people know what is going on the mountain. . . . Personally, I have spent a lot of time at workshops and [listening to] speakers downtown and never hear of these events happening on Burnaby Mountain” (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 30 May 2011).

Some of the individuals interviewed questioned both parties' openness to true engagement:

I think a residue of that slightly anti-intellectual irritation of the past was, you know, the university can't do much for us. I think that remained a bit, although it softened in the warming of the relationships. . . . The city had a nervous sense that the university left to its own devices had no real interest in Burnaby (Former SFU President 3, pers. comm., 7 November, 2014). There was also the opinion that the city was "very sceptical [about] any proposal the university would even make up. . . . [T]hey don't see themselves in an entrepreneurial way. Moving with other interests to create new opportunities—it just gets bloody complicated. . . . So they're not very open to initiatives. (Former SFU President 3, pers. comm., 7 November, 2014)

[The City of Burnaby] is a pretty self-satisfied place. And you know what? They have a right to be. Burnaby is a very well-governed municipality. . . . socially and economically and politically and everything else, it's a fairly homogenous area. . . . They didn't have to deal with the uppity Vancouver, the snotty Vancouver. . . . They manage themselves really well. They did not need a university or anybody else who felt kind of uppity to suggest to them what their relationship ought to be like." (Former SFU President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014)

There appears to be an impasse. Burnaby doesn't approach the university for any assistance, and the university has not proactively connected with the city or other community organizations: "Well, there [is] all kinds of stuff. . . . [T]hey could turn to the university to look for advice or resources. They don't tend to do that" (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014). Several ideas for projects and initiatives have been raised through the years, such as the concept of an SFU campus in Metrotown, but few have been pursued.

5.2.6 Expectations and Lack of a Mutual Strategic Goal

A review of the almost fifty year history of the relationship between SFU and the City of Burnaby does not reveal a mutual strategic goal or initiative other than the general but important university activities of education, research, and employment. The exception is the joint interest and involvement in UniverCity. There is not a process in place for identifying mutual opportunities. The history of the relationship or lack thereof does not allow for an understanding of each other's organizational priorities, strategic goals, or

areas of mutuality. “There was not enough root structure to make everyone work to the same cause” (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 16 July, 2014).

The current city manager highlights this lack of mutual priority: “We really like these things to be more needs-driven than, you know . . . You want to answer the question ‘To what end?’ . . . If we are feeling unfulfilled or if we are feeling like there’s a gap or we are feeling we need something done and . . . SFU could do it, and it’s not happening on the basis of everything we’ve got in place now, then okay, let’s put something in place that might cause it to happen, but I’m not feeling a great number of gaps . . . and I suspect SFU feels somewhat similarly” (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014).

The senior staff member interviewed at the City of Burnaby did not see much motivation to expand the partnership. The following quote underlines the limited expectations of the collaboration:

You know, I don’t think anybody says we should do more or get more or have more to do with SFU; it sort of works for us and, you know, I get the sense that it works for SFU. . . [If] the water system or the sewer system needs to be improved, we’ll probably get about doing that, and the various people at the right level [will] have the discussions that are necessary to get the pump station built or get the pipe run up the hill or that kind of thing and, you know, we had our little discussion about the gondola and, you know, it had its moment in the sun and kind of didn’t really go anywhere. (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014)

The lack of mutual strategic goal has led to a subsequent lack of a sense of urgency, as evidenced by a few of the ideas for collaboration raised by the city: “I think probably it’s because there isn’t a passionate need on either side, it’s ‘Hey what about. . . Wouldn’t it be nice. . .’ and those things, you know, nobody is really driving for getting it solved or settled, then, you know . . . and then people get busy with other things and, you know, we are not pushing it, nobody is pulling it. . . . I don’t know whether the university is feeling slightly less fulfilled because it’s not better integrated with the city or doing more things with the city. . . . [U]sually somebody has to feel a bit of a need” (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014). The councillor also referred to ‘little tokens of partnership’ that occur, such as arranging affordable ice time for the men’s hockey team (Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 24 October, 2014).

Several SFU representatives did not believe that the university should aspire to a closer or more strategic relationship:

Is there some ideal relationship to which the university is not [aspiring]? I don't think [there] is. What should it be? Why should Burnaby be—other than the fact they're in your backyard and you're happy to try and talk [the] pipe band into . . . marching in their parade, help connect them to resources when they want them—if there [is] common interest over fire protection in the conservation area or something, well, sure, let's talk about it. . . . I don't believe there should be an assumption [that] there is an ideal relationship as long as it isn't an anonymous relationship—obviously a bad thing. Because it's to no one's benefit. But an ideal relationship, I can't imagine how you would define it. For any university anywhere. (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014)

Really, maybe the relationships don't have to be great. Maybe it's enough that the kids get their education, they get their degree; they chug off to a job whether it is in Burnaby or Vancouver or Timbuktu and maybe that's enough. (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, pers. comm., 18 August, 2014)

One SFU representative identified the lack of mutuality or overlapping interests in the social, economic or physical domains as a problem, providing UniverCity as the only positive example of a common interest (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014).

The very productive relationships perceived between SFU and its other two host cities might have led to recent higher expectations for a good relationship: “[The productive Surrey relationship] affects the way you look at Burnaby, and it affects how Burnaby looks at you, because they see how well things are going in Vancouver and in Surrey. And they think . . . well, [SFU doesn't] care about Burnaby because they are going elsewhere, and you are looking at it and thinking, ‘Gee, we got these great relationships, what's wrong with Burnaby?’ ” (Third-Party CEO 1, pers. comm., 4 September, 2014).

5.2.6.1 The Metrotown Campus Opportunity

Establishing a campus or campus component in Metrotown has been a long-standing interest of the City of Burnaby and is probably the greatest potential opportunity for a joint objective. This interest might have been triggered by SFU's expansion to Vancouver, although this was not confirmed. (“I think would be fair to say—if not spoken certainly unspoken in the minds of some of Burnaby—well, you've put all that energy down there,

you live in Burnaby, you're the university of Burnaby" (Former SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014).)

The City of Burnaby's interest in a Metrotown campus of SFU is motivated by a desire to develop the neighbourhood and have a university located in the centre of the city:

Universities have to be in core densities of the cities to be relevant. It is not just about [18-to-24-year-olds]. It is about lifelong learning, engaging people where they are. If SFU wants to be more relevant, it has got to commit [to] the centre of [the] city. I have tried to interest SFU [in putting] a campus in Metrotown. . . . [T]here has to be that stage where the university commits to the city it lives in and [becomes] part of central core. . . . Burnaby Mountain is not seen as an attractive place to establish those kinds of synergies." (D. Corrigan at May 2011 meeting)

Despite some attempts several decades ago, the campus presence in Metrotown has not been achieved. The feasibility of continuing studies courses in Metrotown was explored at some point, but local demand was insufficient (Former SFU President 1, *pers. comm.*, 9 May, 2014). University representatives also expressed concern that the university did not have the resources to add a third campus given the great effort expended on the development of a second campus in Vancouver.

Retired representatives of both organizations suggested that SFU's reluctance to proceed with a Metrotown campus might have been interpreted by the City of Burnaby as a lack of commitment: "I suppose that [had] we gone ahead with the Metrotown project, maybe we [would have] had more visibility, but honestly, I just couldn't see problematically what this would be accepting on—another extension campus essentially drawing on the same student population. I guess we didn't value the improved interaction with Burnaby City government that highly" (Former SFU Vice-President Academic, *pers. comm.*, 24 June, 2014). A Burnaby council member indicated that the Metrotown campus would have demonstrated SFU's support for the city: "[The campus] will give us a little bit more . . . more assurance . . . to say, 'Yes, we have a really deep, strong relationship with Simon Fraser University'" (Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 24 October, 2014). A retired Burnaby staff member is stronger in his view: "Deep down, if they had the same respect for us, why didn't they move forward [on] Metrotown? Always grated [on] me. Always regretful. Got tired of hearing no. We were rebuffed. A frustration exercise" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 16 July, 2014).

Some Burnaby staff members downplayed the issue of SFU not proceeding with a Metrotown campus, referring to the situation as a disappointment but “wishing SFU well in its endeavours and personally delighted at what transpired” with its Vancouver campus (Past Senior City Staff, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014). “I don’t think there’s a source of great annoyance or great upset, you know. . . . [I]t’s not much pulling of hair or wringing of hands” (City Manager 1, pers. comm., 28 October, 2014). However, the current mayor identified the unfulfilled desire for a Metrotown campus as “an issue for us. You know we’ve always felt kind of deprived that SFU has never made much effort to be part of the downtown development in Burnaby, you know, it’s been a point of contention I think” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

The university’s response to the council’s interest in a Metrotown campus may also have been negatively perceived. Some staff were concerned that the university was humouring the city: “He was prepared to stroke them a little bit. But it really went nowhere, because it made no sense. . . . You are not going to go to a place like Metrotown. It doesn’t work” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014). The current mayor speaks of SFU’s response to the Metrotown campus opportunity: “[I]t was always [a] very lukewarm response from SFU. You know, SFU never had any real interest, it was constantly dangling—The opportunities that were being offered in Metrotown seemed to SFU to be a little more of a pain in the ass than they were an aspiration” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

5.2.7 Governance and Provincial Interplay

A strong theme that arose during the interviews was the political interplay between the local government and the provincial government, the primary funder of SFU. In the early days, the lack of clarity on accountability, particularly with the need to comply with City of Burnaby processes and bylaws, was an issue. The City of Burnaby also did not wish to contribute municipal funds to a provincial institution. The Municipal Act and University Act are both creatures of the province, but the separate acts “created the sandpaper. The city’s view was . . . ‘They are not paying taxes; how can we do this?’ The university was a part of us but not a part of us. The set-up of the University Act built this thing to fight. Politicians are actors in a play and looking for an audience. They are always ready for a fight. Who has the control? Structure forces people to fight with each other, each party

contesting strength continuously” (unattributed, pers. comm., 16 July, 2014). City of Burnaby representatives also spoke of the conflict caused by gap between local and municipal government mandates: “Obviously Simon Fraser University has its own mandate . . . to meet and serve the region. Burnaby is just one small part of it. . . . We can’t dictate anything other than just some land which we have zoned, beyond that it’s nothing really. . . . Cities are never in the position to provide something financially because we have [a] strict mandate from the province to raise property taxes and only use [them] for those certain prescribed things that we can do” (Councillor, pers. comm., 24 October, 2014).

Some believed that the City of Burnaby took a stronger position on the separation of their mandates than did other cities: “The president—if they were doing their job—had to look at preserving the future opportunities and serving a provincial mandate. That’s what they do. It’s not a municipal university. But a municipality found that hard to comprehend. I don’t think the city government in Vancouver has ever found it particularly hard to understand [that] UBC has a unique role. But Burnaby always did” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014).

The city’s lack of understanding of the complexity of the university and its governance and decision-making models was also mentioned by another interviewee: “The thing that dominated with the Burnaby relationship is a failure to understand the nature of the university as an institution. A failure at least initially to understand the benefit of having such a thing located in their presence. You see it throughout all of the documentation. Burnaby says, ‘We’ll give you the land to let you establish here,’ then [turns] around and [says], ‘Actually we didn’t really like giving you the land, we want to control it’ ” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014).

A university representative spoke of the tension that resulted from the governance issue:

We always went back to the fact that the legal interpretation was that the university holds fee simple title; it’s outside of Burnaby’s jurisdiction. . . . [E]ven though we had cooperated . . . there were actors in the drama on the Burnaby side that were extraordinarily difficult throughout the whole piece. . . . [Y]ou had to force them. . . . The question is how far do you want to damage the relationship even though it’s already crap?” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014)

City of Burnaby representatives also highlighted the political tension at work between the province and local government. The city was seen as needing to protect its resources:

[W]hat's in it for the people I represent that I can say I cut the ribbon in the swimming pool . . . or opened this road and I will get credit for it or council will get credit for it. . . . That's political. I mean, it's self-serving, but the politicians are proxies for the people who elect them. There's that institutional bias, protecting resources, and protecting the status quo. . . . To me, that's a very unsatisfactory way to resolve things between government [and] government. . . the public interest should be the overriding interest. (City Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 23 October, 2014)

The other important factor complicating provincial–municipal politics identified by those interviewed is that for most of SFU's history, the party of the local government has not been aligned with the provincial party in power. Several SFU participants identified the conflict created by the provincial–municipal–university dynamic: “So because SFU has to keep its mirror shining with the provincial cabinet necessarily, it can't be avoided. Burnaby would feel out, perhaps . . . like musical chairs” (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

One university representative saw the university as being “victimized” by this circumstance. For this reason, the ability of other municipal governments to advocate for provincial resources for the university was rarely utilised. There was only a short period during which the government in power was aligned with the city's political party in office: “then a harmonic relationship between the provincial government and the city government was better—not perfect, because the city is always complaining about the province, always. But they felt sort of more touched, and the cabinet ministers knew the councillors and that kind of thing. (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014)

The current university president, a former provincial elected official, comments on the effect of municipal priorities on provincial decisions, calling them:

Not necessarily determinative but certainly influential. . . . The province doesn't see institutions in isolation from the communities in which they are situated. . . . A municipality can also encourage provincial investments by bringing local resources to the table, sweetening the pot and thereby making the provincial investment go that much further. (SFU President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014)

In addition to the factors above, the policies and actions taken during certain times by the provincial government were instrumental in the relationship. The cost-cutting measures that occurred in the 1980s triggered SFU's desire to build and make use of its lands for residential development. At the time of SFU's land dispute with Burnaby, the university was under pressure due to the growing demand for post-secondary spaces and the reduction in operating funding (Kirby, 1994a). This may have led to SFU's desire to settle the dispute and proceed with building a residential community to generate revenue from other sources.

While SFU representatives highlighted the impact of the provincial–municipal relationship, the mayor disagreed but did not see a major role for the city in advocating for the university: “I mean, there’s a lot of issues that SFU faces that concern us as a city, [and] aside from adding our voice, there’s not a lot we can do in order to try and sway some of those problems” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

5.3 Assessment of Interface Structures and Management Processes

5.3.1 SFU–Burnaby Liaison Committee

The SFU–Burnaby Liaison Committee has had a few iterations, including its start as a staff-only committee of City of Burnaby and SFU planning staff. It currently includes senior staff from both organizations, including the university president and several vice-presidents, the mayor and three councillors, and representatives from UniverCity. At times, the committee has been dormant. Its most important revival occurred when it was needed during discussions that led to a suitable negotiated solution to the land issue in the '90s.

Over the past five years, a review of the meeting agendas of the Burnaby Liaison Committee shows that participants primarily submitted building and campus development updates, including those that regarded SFU UniverCity. With a few exceptions, areas for potential cooperation were submitted by SFU; very few items were submitted by the City of Burnaby. The mayor of Burnaby explains this situation as follows:

We tend to use [the committee] to be informed about what SFU is doing. . . . [The university] isn't nearly as interested in what's happening in the rest of the city. . . . It doesn't directly impact them. . . . [The university] has its own issues, and it's not nearly

so holistic. . . . I'm not being critical about that. It's just the different roles we play and the way we approach issues. (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014)

University representatives were uniformly negative about the benefits of the committee. One interviewee categorized the relationship and the committee as, "a watching brief; they're not interested in the game" (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014).

[T]he nature of those meetings was 'hail fellows well met' . . . so nobody really wanted to get into serious discussions. . . . [A]n issue would be brought up, dealt with lightly, and then let's move on. It was up to subsequent topic-specific meetings [to] actually deal with an issue. . . . [T]he liaison meetings were not negotiation meetings. They were 'what's on each other's mind' kind of meetings. So they were good, but at the same time . . . we needed to have staff relationships that didn't involve the councillors or the mayor or the president or any of the political side, and those continued, but outside of the agenda of these formal political meetings. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014)

I'm not convinced it works perfectly well, because it's theatre and, you know, everybody expressing a position without necessarily moving to the next step. . . . (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014).

Others interviewed from the city and from UniverCity had a more positive view of the purpose of the liaison committee, noting the benefits of a vehicle for finding mutual solutions to problems and the avenue for less formal, directed discussion:

[I]t's interesting theatre and in a funny way it actually works because it allows the city, the university, and [UniverCity Trust] to see what everybody else is doing and identify those areas where we need to be working together. And often we will use those dinners as an opportunity to go straight back to council or to the city, rather, the next day, to say, "Well, we talked about this last night, you know" . . . At those dinners, we get a signal, a sense of urgency that sometimes gets lost, both at the university and the city otherwise" (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014).

Others highlighted the committee's ability to help people to get to know each other personally and connect informally, which helped break the ice if a difficult call had to be made (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014). A participant comments, "[I]t's the conversations—that Liaison Committee of groups of two and three standing around chatting before we sat down to dinner. To me that's where the work gets done. . . . And if

we have to endure either the president of the university or the mayor or me going on about how great we are and all the wonderful things we are doing. . . . That's a small price to pay for the opportunity to be in a room with people who are focussed on the issues and projects that affect all three parties simultaneously. So skip the dinner. Meet, have cocktails, chat after, done!" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014).

The local government elected official interviewed felt that the purpose, membership, and frequency of meetings were appropriate, especially given the limited availability of the mayor, president, and senior administrators of the two institutions. The Committee serves as a vehicle for sharing information and also trying to develop some long-term vision (Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 24 October, 2014). This same individual recognized the benefits of participation by both levels of the organization, the elected representatives and the staff: "We are not guessing whether it will be done or not because you have now, basically, the people who are the CEOs and the chief operational officers of the two institutions . . . and then it's not a second-guessing of staff or . . . some other . . . committee [as] to . . . what [the people] upstairs [are] going to think" (City Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 24 October, 2014).

The participation of the mayor and president alongside staff was seen as critical by a number of those interviewed. University presidents and Burnaby mayors made it a priority to attend: "The Liaison [Committee] has been a good idea, and it's one I enjoy and I encourage. I think, you know, the meeting doesn't seem to mean a heck of a lot if I'm not there" (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

A long-time city staff member was also positive about the results achieved through the Liaison Committee: "The sense I have of it [is that] there was a lot of enthusiasm at the outset, and we tended to deal with kind of marginal issues, not really critical, large-scale issues but friction points. And it served the purpose. We worked our way through a number of things. . . . Then in the absence of a kind of a new grand cause I think the interest . . . sort of waned for a period of time, and then when the city decided to push its agenda in terms of the conservation area—open space—and the university at the same time was very strongly interested in providing [for the] endowment fund and providing [a] more complete community here on the mountain, those two things together renewed the spark of life into the process" (Past Senior City Staff, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014).

A few participants commented about the need to not rely on these meetings as the sole opportunity for interchange:

I think it depends a lot on the personalities of the players and the leaders, and during the majority of those meetings it was [university president] versus [city mayor], with two very strong personalities. . . . I don't think it would have been productive to have serious discussion between those two personalities with an audience. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014)

Twice-a-year meetings like that are useless. They have to have ongoing meetings, and they have to have specific kinds of issues to be working over for [them] to be of any value at all. There's no point in a bunch of SFU meeting with a bunch of Burnaby people without some sort of specific kind of agenda and maybe also terms of reference as to what the committee is trying to accomplish. (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, pers. comm., 18 August, 2014)

5.3.2 The Role of University Presidents and City Mayors

The active involvement and the one-on-one relationship between the university president and city mayor were considered very important by many interviewees from both the university and the city. "Well, both parties at the end of the day are the individuals responsible for championing their respective interest[s]. So regardless of the different relationships of the organizations at whatever level below them, they at the end of the day are the ones who will make the key decisions. So it's [an] extremely important relationship that needs to be a good one" (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, pers. comm., 3 October, 2014). Another interviewee observed: "So much of Burnaby's political culture comes out of the mayor's office, or it appears to. . . . [T]he relationship therefore has to be with the president [as] the symbolic ranking counterpart. So if that relationship . . . is kind of like the Chinese saying, you know it's the mandate of heaven, [if] that relationship is blessed, then other good things could follow. . . . [E]verything else is a reflection of how good the mayor and the president get along. Do they play golf together?" (SFU Faculty member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

Interviewees from the City of Burnaby contrasted the higher profile of the SFU president's role with another Burnaby post-secondary institution: "You know, [when] SFU gets a president . . . you know what's going on . . . and they are there for [a] fairly extended

period of time. Their message is clear and their direction is clear” (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

Some past SFU presidents who experienced good university–city relationships at other universities attempted to apply these experiences to the SFU–Burnaby relationship. A past SFU president comments, “In my experience in [another city]—it was a small city, and I knew every member council. I was on the boards of a couple organizations in the city, I knew the mayor very, very well. . . . There was much more going on, and we needed the city’s support at [the university] just to strengthen our profile” (Past SFU President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014).

A positive relationship also resulted when another recent SFU president and city mayor “hit it off” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014) and “got each other” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014). The connection was attributed in part to the characteristics of the president: “[The president] gets theatre. He gets performance.” (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014). The president had a reputation for “being at times fairly critical of what was going on with [the province] and never reticent about sharing it. . . . But that has sort of endeared him to [the mayor] because, you know, [the mayor] never met a controversial opinion he didn’t like either” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014). The president and mayor “had a great personal relationship. I used to organize lunch for them every couple of months. They never missed a lunch and engagement” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014).

That same university president acknowledges that he “worked very hard on the personal relationship with [the mayor] and established a very good personal relationship with [him]. I would visit him regularly on official visits and we agreed that [I would get] to know the city manager and the chief planner, the deputy planner on a personal basis” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014). Several individuals including the mayor mentioned that the president and the mayor golfed together, perhaps to provide evidence of their closeness, although the president had no recollection of this. The need for greater awareness of provincial government and municipal relations motivated the president to get involved. “He came to appreciate that because of our developments and the fact that we have campuses right in the middle of the city, that we had a different role

of the cities all together and that the relationship was important [to] both our interests” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014).

The productive result of these warm relationships was highlighted: “Establishing a sense of personal connection and trust was actually very important to greasing the wheels. I mean, at the end of the day, things were going to be treated very professionally and very technically and very openly in terms of the zoning approvals and all the rest of it. But the establishment of the direct personal relationship and then of that liaison committee that met regularly was a very good thing” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).

The fact that the mayor and president showed up at events held by each other’s organizations demonstrated their supportive relationship: “It use to tickle his [the mayor’s] fancy to come up and cut the haggis [during Robbie Burns Day celebrations] . . . and he liked doing those things and being greeted as the mayor. Initially I think he wouldn’t be seen dead on campus” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014). “So get to that point in the relationship, and you’ll find you have a real ally. What’s in it for him? What can you do to that makes him look good? Have him on the podium” (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014).

The relationships between some of the other presidents and mayors were not as warm. “Well, I knew that for a good number of years, the president of the university and the mayor of Burnaby really almost refused to talk to one another. I mean they mutually ignored each other” (Former SFU Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014). In these situations, one approach to mitigating the situation was to involve other SFU representatives, though that sometimes was not perceived positively by the city: “They always sent a flunky, they always held back. . . . You need senior people involved—the president/vice-presidents and mayor/deputy mayor if this is a priority item” (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 16 July, 2014).

The relationship between the mayor and president was also influenced by how the incumbents related to one another: “[T]hat’s the truth in all areas of life and in business. [I]t’s true too that you get relationships where a couple of people hit it off, they like each other’s company, they tend to be more willing to talk candidly, they get past issues quicker,

you know, where you've got to more stand off this relationship and where you're not so engaged . . . you don't get as much done. . . . [Y]ou tend to be more willing to listen or more willing to be able to work with" (Mayor, pers. comm., 18 December, 2014). A mayor compares the relationships he has had with different SFU Presidents: "[T]hat [first president] and I tended to have a closer personal relationship, and I think . . . Maybe because we are both political scientists and so we had a lot to talk about and we tended to talk about international politics and perspectives and . . . we did things that were personal more often than I do with [second president]. . . . And so the relationship is good but different in that sense" (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014).

A good relationship between the mayor and president is important, and the degree of effort they make to forge a relationship as well as the personal connections they form due to complementary personalities and interests have an influence. The relationship is even more important when the mayor and president have a strong influence on their organizations, as most do. Despite the importance of a positive or close relationship between the mayor and president, this relationship does not necessarily translate into more support for each other's organization's projects or more joint efforts to pursue opportunities.

5.3.3 Relationship Building Across Different Organizational Levels

The relationship between the city mayor and university president is important, but many observed that positive relationships at the staff level are equally important. It may be the case that a positive staff-to-staff relationship is more important if there is a poor relationship between the city mayor and the university president. The relationships between the heads of "powerful departments who control big money, engineering, [and] planning parks and [recreation]" are critical (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014).

The interviewed staff from both organizations spoke about the relationship-building activities that occurred across organizational levels and the challenges produced by a poor relationship at the senior administrative level. A good working relationship between staff appeared to have been achieved, especially after the land transaction was settled. The early relationship was described as "a little bit of irritation, not a whole lot of conflict. . . .

The relationships were positive” (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, *pers. comm.*, 18 August, 2014).

The interactions between organizations mainly involved a small number of individuals from the planning department and a few other city staff departments and did not include any faculty: “I don’t recall in the very early days that there was a whole lot of relationship between Burnaby and Simon Fraser. . . . I think . . . the relationship that mostly the university had . . . was partly between myself and the planning director at Burnaby. [We] had a pretty good relationship, although we disagreed on a lot” (Former SFU Senior Staff 2, *pers. comm.*, 18 August, 2014). Linkages between university staff and faculty and Burnaby city staff might have existed without widespread awareness: “I suspect if you go one layer beyond . . . let’s say at the operation[al] level . . . there will be more cooperation on any other front” (Councillor, *pers. comm.*, 24 October, 2014).

Staff from both the city and university spoke of building relationships and getting work done with their counterparts and ignoring the situation at senior levels of the organization. “Your responsibilities are to get a project done or an issue resolved and in that sense, you screened out the higher-level politics of it and you [tried] to establish a direct working relationship with your opposite numbers at city hall. . . . [W]e would go down there and have lunch or meet with the folks at city hall or the building inspectors . . . and try to have a very close working relationship with them and just totally ignore whatever was happening at the higher levels of politics. . . . And at that level, the people in those positions by and large were happy with that. I mean it suited them. We didn’t have any particular obstacles in dealing with them” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

5.3.4 Liaison People or Boundary Spanners

In the history of the relationship between SFU and the City of Burnaby, only a few individuals were appointed to attempt to bridge the two organizations, and only one individual attempted to connect the city to the academic mission and operation of the university.

The history of the relationship made the attempt to build connections more challenging: “I didn’t have status, I just [had] this curious role, but that was where . . . the relationship got

revealed as something completely—completely contradicted” (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014). Speaking of a different role on the board of the UniverCity development, the same faculty member said: “So I was in this double world now of seeing what the university thought. . . . It was submerged in different departments, not very visible to a person like me” (SFU Faculty Member 1, *pers. comm.*, 30 September, 2014).

When asked directly about the need for a liaison person or function, interviewees expressed mixed views: “[T]here needs to be someone else who chooses Burnaby . . . to represent us and SFU” (Third-Party CEO 1, pers. comm., 4 September 2014). One individual suggested that only occasional attendance at council meetings was required, and there was no need for a liaison person (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, pers. comm., 4 April, 2014). An appointed Burnaby liaison person was felt to have a limited impact: “I don’t find [liaison people] particularly compelling, I mean I also always felt a little bit . . . sorry for [SFU staff member] . . . because he seemed to be looking for things to do. . . . [The staff member] was a good guy to talk to and so on, good dinner companion or whatever, and so [he provided] a little bit more of that social interaction. Did it bring us closer together? Maybe a little bit” (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014).

When describing effective liaison people, a number of interviewees described certain important characteristics: “I mean, he [referencing first CEO of UniverCity] was a good developer, superb communicator, went to Burnaby, talked to them all the time, listened to them all the time, went into the community” (Former President 1, *pers. comm.*, 9 May, 2014).

In the case of Burnaby, there were only a few identified examples of SFU representatives being involved in city committees or vice-versa. One interviewee commented on the value of membership in a city committee: “So once in a while I would meet [the university president] and say—I would kind of tell him what I heard in the council, you know in the halls, the city hall and especially at the committee meetings. . . . [I]t was [a] very prestigious kind of committee” (SFU Faculty Member 1, pers. comm., 30 September, 2014).

5.3.5 Informal/Social Opportunities and Individual Relationships

A theme that frequently arose during the interviews was the importance of more informal and social interaction outside of formal structures. Interviewees provided many specific examples and elaborate descriptions of personalities and operating styles. A few of the most pertinent examples:

[We] had become friends over the years, and we spent an hour bullshitting every time we get together, talking about various perspectives on . . . our kids and all of those things. . . . [T]here are people who are more inclined to hang out. (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014)

Is there somebody across the table that you can phone up outside of the structure and say, “What about this?” . . . [I]f you have the relationship, then you can make things happen. Now you may have to have a structure which formalizes the relationship. But you hopefully build the relationship inside of that structure. . . . [T]he structure is a tool . . . but it doesn’t make the thing work.” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014)

Who do you schmooze [with]. Who do you actually have a regard for on the other side of the table who’s going to be straight with you. Even if it’s off record—outside of, you know, doesn’t have to be in a formal setting—but can you phone them and say, “This is what we’re thinking about. Before we float this, what’s the deal?” (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014)

The interviewed representatives of third-party organizations spoke extensively about their work to establish personal relationships with the mayor and other city officials:

My operating style is pick up the phone, wander down, drop in, show up, have conversations. Scheduling meetings—suddenly there’s the need for an agenda, suddenly everybody is a little more sensitive in both what they reveal and what they don’t. . . . I don’t see [SFU staff member] and their team spending the amount of time we spent with the city. I don’t see them at the same events. . . . [W]e’ve invested a lot of time and energy in building the relationships, and I don’t know if [SFU staff members] have that same easy rapport with everyone in the city. (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014)

Another interviewee highlighted the importance of individual relationships as opposed to committees or organizational structure:

That organizational structure doesn't matter a damn. Has nothing to do with outcome. The only thing that matters is connections. . . . But you can't get people to talk; you can't get people to even negotiate, which was the history of failed non-negotiations with Burnaby largely on the Burnaby side, because you didn't have the personal connections. . . . You couldn't create an organizational structure that could do what [SFU senior administrator] could do as a person walking in the door, having a martini with somebody. That's the way it works. (Former SFU Senior Staff 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 April, 2014)

Some individuals interviewed disagreed with the idea that social and information connections were sufficient in the absence of a joint project or priority: "[S]imply showing up at City of Burnaby events and having meetings with every councillor once a week, unless there was something to talk about. . . . In other words, what's really of common interest? A program or a physical thing? . . . There has to be something to talk about to make that . . . significant effort you are going to put into the communication worthwhile. Otherwise it becomes like the Liaison Committee . . . a nice excuse to smile at each other" (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

5.3.6 Use of Third-Party Organizations

Simon Fraser University does not make major use of third-party organizations in its relationship with the City of Burnaby. The exception has been sponsorship of and attendance at events of the Burnaby Board of Trade, with which the university has a long-standing relationship of over thirty years. The existence of the UniverCity development and the efforts of UniverCity staff have been positive developments: "[T]he staff at the City of Burnaby are now accustomed because of a much greater interaction . . . to deal with the university as a developer" (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014). UniverCity staff describe their relationship with the City of Burnaby as "a superb working relationship, particularly with the planning department that allows us to do things that might otherwise seem difficult or impossible. . . . A really close relationship based on trust and confidence. We can't take this land to another jurisdiction. We have to work with Burnaby. They know that, but it also means that they are benefitting from the kinds of things we are doing. . . . [W]e're the applicant, and they are the regulator" (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014). While some disagreed, many of those interviewed did see the growth of the population of UniverCity as potentially creating possible conflict. However, it may have the beneficial effect of leading the city to consider

additional infrastructure in response to residents' calls for more equitable amenities. The city may also take a more active interest in representing the residents and becoming more involved in developments at the university.

5.4 Conclusions: The SFU-City of Burnaby Relationship

This chapter detailed the evolution of the almost 50 year relationship between SFU and the City of Burnaby relationship. Extensive archival research of SFU files and media clippings, along with insights of those involved over the years was helpful in understanding the complex dynamics.

The relationship cannot be considered to be a collaboration given the minimal interaction. Most representatives would not see the other organization's representatives as responsive and appreciative of one another. Geographic isolation, the lack of a community engagement mission during the formational years, and the lesser priority given to regional economic development by both the city and the university has had an impact. The responsibility for the state of the current relationship is a joint one. The university leadership's lack of awareness of the original donation of land points to the poor institutional memory of the university. The city has not appeared open to utilisation of the universities expertise. The challenge might be in knowing how to access to this expertise or the lack of expectation that the university will respond given the limited progress on previous ideas proposed by the city. The negative incident of the land dispute, while resolved, and perhaps some minor failures such as the inability to realize a Metrotown campus has not created any interest in a closer relationship despite joint successes such as UniverCity. The organization culture of a strong, proud independent organization may also limit the opportunity. While advancing the relationship is a challenge, a number of recommendations are provided in the concluding chapter to begin the long-term process to restore trust and consider mutual opportunities.

The next chapter will summarize the SFU-City of Surrey collaboration. The final chapter will review the key themes identified in both case studies and consider the findings from the literature before providing recommendations to the participating organizations as well as general advice for cities and universities wishing to build closer collaborations.

Chapter Six: The City of Surrey–SFU Collaboration



*Figure 4: Central City Complex, Location of SFU Surrey Campus
(Source: Bing Thom and Associates)*

6.1 The Evolution of the Relationship

6.1.1 Phases in the Relationship and Key Incidents

So the idea of building [a] relationship I think is . . . sort of fundamental to the business plan of the university, and that is a welcomed element in Surrey because you are helping us build the city, and hopefully we can help you build the university. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

6.1.1.1 An Unusual Campus Genesis

Simon Fraser University's third campus, SFU Surrey, had an unusual start. Simon Fraser's proposal was selected from a call to the post-secondary sector to assume the operations of a newly established university that the province decided to close down. Seven

institutions responded with proposals, with SFU's submission selected. A major feature of SFU's proposal was an assurance that the university would allow the current students of the Technical University of BC (TechBC), then numbering a few hundred, to graduate from SFU with further coursework. The university's success in establishing a satellite campus in Vancouver also probably weighed in its favour. In previous decades, SFU had from time to time considered a Fraser Valley campus, although no opportunity occurred to trigger a more thorough assessment.

The provincial government's decision to award a new campus to SFU was publicized in a BC Open Cabinet Meeting broadcast on February 7, 2002. Members of the legislature who represented communities in the region voiced their support for the decision:

I think this is good news for Surrey, good news for Delta. [Simon Fraser University] is coming to Surrey. They'll be bringing with them a place of excellence and also a great reputation. I think students will gain. I want to say thank you. That was the best decision. (Hon. G. Cheema)

I'm sure we'll look at the satellite part of it and see how we can change "satellite" to have more meaning and value as it grows. Clearly, we believe that there are some unique opportunities, as well, for the full range of degree-granting facilities, the research capabilities, a number of things that obviously there has to be a critical mass to support. But certainly this is a great step forward in terms of doing that. (Hon. G. Hogg)

A two-page memorandum of understanding served as the basis for SFU to begin planning the campus, with an initial agreement for the funding of 860 full-time–equivalent student spaces.

6.1.1.2 Connecting Vision and Mission to Community

The importance of the campus to the City of Surrey's economic development aspirations and the need for SFU to connect with the community were central themes from the very beginning for both the province and SFU. The SFU president's address to the Surrey Chamber on March 16, 2004, highlighted the economic benefits of the establishment of SFU Surrey: increasing post-secondary participation rates, providing a venue for public lectures and possibly conferences, and transferring technology and knowledge.

Both elected officials and administrators of the City of Surrey as well as the community of Surrey welcomed the arrival of SFU, especially given the alternative of the complete closure of TechBC. (“We inherited a very strong political community interest in the university. We didn’t create it. But it was there. We could simply embrace it. . . . Very quickly, the community organizations switched . . . horses when one horse was dying” (Former University President 3, pers. comm., 7 November, 2014).) The merchants of the shopping centre in which TechBC was to be located were excited about SFU’s plans, given the retail impact of an expanded customer base of students, staff, faculty, and visitors. When then-President Michael Stevenson presented at a Surrey Chamber (now Surrey Board of Trade) meeting, he was asked about SFU’s commitment to that location. When he replied that the university had zero commitment to the location, a murmur of shock went through the room. However, he further explained that SFU needed to do its due diligence before choosing a location. This included the development of a business case to the province for capital and operating funding to enable expansion beyond the original allocation of 860 students.

The business case for a campus that would accommodate a total of 2,500 students was submitted in 2004. An extensive internal academic planning process was completed to consider the short-term and long-term issues.¹⁰ (For example, interviews for the hiring of faculty were conducted over the weekend, and there was much debate about the overlap between the TechBC and SFU curricula.) An SFU representative suggested that the City of Surrey Council did not agree with the inclusion of some of the short-listed locations. (“Look, you guys can do studies as long as you want to, but you know we are not building a university in Green Timbers. So study away!” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 22 February, 2014)). This same staff member recalled that the city’s perception was that the province was stalling in making further investment until other budget priorities were met.

The province’s acceptance of SFU’s business case was a critical milestone in the campus’ development. This funding of almost \$70 million Canadian enabled the purchase and fit out of a permanent campus at Central City, a mixed-use shopping centre and office tower,

¹⁰ The reports of the short-term and long-term academic committees can be found at http://www.sfu.ca/scp/Document_Archive/Short_Term_PC/.

and expansion of the campus to 2,500 full-time–equivalent students. This expansion was part of an unprecedented province-wide initiative that created 25,000 post-secondary student spaces.

The community and the provincial premier trumpeted the decision about the permanent campus location: “Surrey is about to become home to one of the country’s great learning institutions. Surrey takes second place to no city in the province, no city in the country. It’s missing one little thing, one little ingredient. You needed a great university, right here in the city. . . . [T]his city is on its way to greatness. Simon Fraser, we’ve got you surrounded, and we’re ready to go” (BC Premier Gordon Campbell as cited in Diakiw, 2004).

At the opening of the permanent campus, SFU’s president recognized that SFU Surrey was the result of a dynamic partnership with all levels of the government of Surrey, including the mayor and city council:

Today marks a new beginning for higher education in this region, an era in which one of Canada’s most dynamic centres of population and economic growth will be allied with one of Canada’s front-ranking universities. . . . [Simon Fraser University] Surrey will become closely tied to the life of this community, bringing the benefits of increased accessibility to university degree programmes, increased value added to the research and development capacity of the region, and innovative approaches to community outreach through programmes for professional development and life-long learning. (Michael Stevenson at opening of SFU Surrey’s permanent campus, 2006)

The decision to locate the SFU Surrey campus in the mixed-used Central City complex was not without controversy. The site was perceived as “an NDP boondoggle; it had no chance of success. Financially drained . . . we had to work at it and . . . we came from a long way back from the start line” (unattributed, pers. comm., 5 September 2014). When the development sold in 2007, the history as a “scandal on the same scale as the fast ferry fiasco” (a financially troubled provincial initiative) and the various write-downs were outlined (Kane, 2007). The location also had the potential to lead to issues with the city, which had originally donated the land for the project with the expectation that a university and a performing arts centre would follow at a later stage. This initial agreement will be discussed later in the chapter.

6.1.1.3 Building Relationships and Establishing Interaction Structures

After the excitement of the initial announcement in 2002, there was a short period of little interaction between representatives of the City of Surrey and the university. When SFU came to Surrey, the institution was largely unknown to the city. Initially, the city council feared that the campus would become little more than a “storefront” operation and would not have the same commitment as TechBC to promoting the incubation of new companies. A larger, more impersonal institution might not consult the community as much, and it was possible that the city would not enjoy the same open access and communication that it had with TechBC. “So while the city mayor was saying all the right things about SFU potentially bringing much more to the table because of its international standing and research excellence, there was still a sense that the city had lost something of its own identity when TechBC was phased out. TechBC had been ‘Surrey’s own university’, with a unique mandate and ‘one-of-a-kind’ programmes. They saw it as Surrey’s answer to MIT” (Hurd, 2015).

A closer relationship between the City of Surrey and SFU Surrey is believed to have begun with the involvement of Surrey’s city manager on the SFU Surrey Community Advisory Council in 2002. The council had approximately twenty members, including chief executive officers from local businesses and business organizations. In an interview, the city manager emphasized the value of this council in keeping the organizations connected and creating a new network and forum for the city:

I think that’s a great idea. . . . [E]very time I attend those meetings, I realize how much interest there is [on] the part of the university to be engaged with different elements in the community and how much interest there is in those different elements to assist the university to be all that can be. . . . [W]hoever came up with that idea . . . was somebody that recognized that we need to remove barriers . . . that limit dialogue. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011).

Simon Fraser University and the City of Surrey did not proceed to establish a bilateral liaison committee like the one that existed in Burnaby. Instead, throughout the years, in addition to the involvement of the community council, City of Surrey staff and elected officials were extremely responsive to requests to set up meetings and presentations at the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. (Attendees from the city included the mayor, several councillors, and the city manager.) The frequency of these meetings is not

documented, but there were probably at least a dozen meetings scheduled in most years. Lunch meetings would be arranged at least annually between the president, mayor, Vice-President for External Relations, and SFU Surrey Executive Director. The university ensured that the city mayor and councillors were invited to major university events and functions including annual gala dinners and provincial and federal funding announcements.

The primary contact point for the City of Surrey was the office of the SFU Surrey Executive Director, with the addition of periodic meetings arranged by the Government Relations Officer, who was based at SFU Burnaby.¹¹ The strategy that was taken was twofold: ensuring SFU was visible as an open, accessible, responsive organization interested in the city and community and demonstrating relevance of its research capability.

Ensure that SFU is visible as an open, accessible, responsive organization interested in the city and community. After taking the initiative to ask to be placed on a city committee, the SFU Surrey executive director was invited to sit on numerous city committees over the years. The executive director also built relationships with key staff including the city manager and heads of Transportation and Engineering; Culture, Parks, and Recreation; and Economic Development. Participating on the boards of directors of third-party organizations, including the Surrey Board of Trade and the Downtown Business Improvement Association, provided the executive director with further perspectives on city issues and another opportunity to interact with Surrey councillors and staff. The executive director was also a constant fixture at evening community events and business meetings. These were an important avenue for asking quick questions or briefly highlighting an issue or opportunity and provided visibility and evidence of SFU's support. The Surrey mayor noted the university's responsiveness during a speech in which she referenced always calling the executive director because she was never told "No" in response to a request.

In 2004 and 2008, agreements were entered into to document and communicate the progress of the relationship rather than provide specific direction. The 2004 memorandum of understanding (MOU) suggests an annual report to City Council and SFU's senior

¹¹ A small anecdote that illustrates the SFU Surrey executive director's role as the institutional face of SFU involves a city staff member who could not recall her name shouting "Miss SFU!" to gain her attention.

executive and formal presentations on a semi-annual basis to the city's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. This report was provided only once and not pursued after city staff changed and new efforts took precedence.

Find avenues to connect SFU's faculty and programmes to city issues and opportunities and demonstrate the value of research. City elected officials and staff primarily saw the research component of SFU as a branding opportunity and a catalyst for the development of a newly designated City Centre. They did not initially understand the opportunities it provided for access to expertise and the doors it opened regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Demonstrating the relevance of the research took a number of years and several attempts, starting with selecting a graduate student and professor to conduct a study on vertical greenhouses, soliciting technical advice on energy systems, and commissioning white papers for Surrey's regional economic summit. Involvement with the city and participation in community organizations helped the executive director identify further opportunities. Her prior experience of knowledge and technology transfer at SFU allowed her to identify qualified and willing faculty based at any of SFU's campuses. Often, the executive director would be present at initial meetings to ensure the conversation went smoothly and follow-up was conducted.

The city eventually learned the value of SFU's responsiveness and the access provided to university expertise: If someone walks in and they sort of say, "Well, you know, we are struggling with this in our community. What can you do for us?" that there's an immediate connection with someone in the university that is engaged in the relevant realm that can say, "This is what we can do' (Former City Manager, pers. comm., 12 May, 2011).

The very first piece of significant public policy that we embarked upon right when I became mayor was our crime-reduction strateg[y]. So we pulled in the criminologist from SFU . . . to work with us on the development of public policy. That to me really again was . . . significant . . . just by having that resource at our fingertips. Really being able to bring in somebody that was an expert in their field. (Former City Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 12 January, 2014)

So it went from one introduction of a lunch. . . . Gordon found out that I was looking for a way to build up advocacy in the community for transportation. At the time I was actually thinking of maybe bringing a few lectures in. And then he pipes in: "Oh, come

down to Portland”, and a month later I saw his talk at the Portland course that he did. I thought, “That’s the ticket.” Then within a year we had the whole program going with SFU as partners, and it’s been running ever since. Great success. (City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

Interviews conducted with several city representatives in 2011 documented the evolution of the city’s perception of the university from “human resource–producing machine” to “research to feed the economic engine” (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011). Some of this shift in thinking may have resulted from the city’s increasing focus on creating more jobs for its residents. However, city representatives also felt that they had learned more about the possible contributions of a research university through joint initiatives and interaction with the university. A city councillor admitted that she had not expected the types of programmes (such as mechatronics, an interdisciplinary engineering program) that were established at SFU Surrey. The city manager highlighted the importance of choosing research in relevant areas in which SFU Surrey would be recognized as on the leading edge. This created a force of gravity that would bring “the right people to the city”. City officials advocated for research that would be applicable locally, and one commented that in connecting to global research, the main goal of university faculty members should be to ensure that their research is not redundant.

The mayor commented on the gradual understanding of a research university’s potential contributions: “But once we started collaborating on that front, it was really clear to see that there were so many different other opportunities which we hadn’t explored before. . . . Whether it was . . . looking at other students that would do practicums at city hall. . . . [W]hether it was engineering or planning or political science, whatever that was. So it became very evident there it was multifaceted. . . . Whether it was mental health and addictions, whether it was the crime aspect of it. Whether it was, again, growing sectors of the [economy]. The partnerships were really key in terms of what each person could bring to the table” (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014).

Just as the city gradually came to understand the roles and contributions of a research university, SFU came to realize the benefits of a strong city partner. These benefits included creating opportunities for research projects and advocacy for SFU proposals for research funding and expansion efforts.

6.1.1.4 Early Results and Successes

An important decision point for SFU Surrey was the academic plan. Fortunately, the city's early fears were not realized; instead, SFU's administration and senate agreed that Surrey provided a unique opportunity to expand the university's reach into the Fraser Valley. A new, innovative campus with strong academic and research programmes was the result. While SFU was "starting from a 'deficit position' in Surrey, particularly in terms of community support", SFU's efforts to connect with the city were vital to easing the transition from TechBC (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 22 February, 2014).

The Surrey mayor is quoted in a 2012 SFU Surrey 10th anniversary publication saying that a "strong partnership is clearly evident as we create the city of the future" ("SFU Surrey: A Campus Future, Your Future"), and SFU Surrey was often referred to as "our Simon Fraser University" by city councillors.

As early as 2007, positive progress was noted:

We didn't get a chance to reflect on the successes of the past year (joint projects, committee involvement and contributions, student hirings etc.) . . . The relationships that have been built, and the start of some of these pilot collaborative projects position us well for more ambitious projects and impacts. (Email exchange between City Manager and SFU Surrey Executive Director, August 16, 2007)

Not all joint initiatives or interactions were successful. Some failed or unrealized initiatives that interviewees recalled included a public announcement that did not acknowledge the city's role (in the case of SFU's first entrepreneur-in-residence), an industry-led organization in which the local government and SFU participated that lost momentum (Fraser Valley Technology Network), and a student residence project agreed to by the Surrey City Development Corporation that has not yet been realized. Some friction at the staff level occurred due to the use of university facilities and the lack of acknowledgement of space and staff support for city events. ("Don't want to say 'entitlement', but almost. It was almost an extension of their space sometimes" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014).) There was also at least one incident in which the city viewed the university's offer to participate in a homelessness and housing research study as criticism due to a lack of understanding of their approach and innovations.

Some of the milestones in the development of the campus are provided in the table below.

Table 8: SFU Surrey Timeline

February, 2002: Announcement of new SFU campus in Surrey and welcoming of first class in September 2002, joining former students of TechBC. Programmes included TechOne, Media Arts, Design, Informatics, and Management & Technology.
2002: Invitation to business and community leaders to the SFU Surrey Community Advisory Council to “advise the university and assist us in one of the most important mandates of a public institution—staying connected and responsive to the community” (letter from Michael Stevenson, December 2, 2002, to city manager, City of Surrey).
2004: Provincial announcement of \$70 million Canadian capital investment and 2,500 student spaces at SFU Surrey. New programmes in Software Systems, Explorations in Arts and Social Sciences, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Finance, and Marketing.
2006: Official opening of SFU Surrey’s permanent facility, moving from temporary space to 200,375 square feet of initial footprint.
2006: Inception of SFU Surrey School District 36 Liaison Committee and SFU India Advisory Council. Identification of City of Surrey and SFU as “partners in economic development” with several areas of collaboration including promoting Surrey with business and industry outside area, economic development and diversification, and support of entrepreneurship.
2007: Further expansion of the campus to 322,671 square feet. New programmes launched in Mechatronic Systems Engineering, Criminology, World Literature, and Life Sciences, as well as a Professional Development Program for Teachers, Aboriginal University bridging program, and Surrey Transportation Lecture Program.
2008: Simon Fraser University faculty authored three white papers to support the Surrey Regional Economic Summit.
2009: Further programmes launched, including Master of Arts for Teachers of English, General Studies in Education, Professional Qualification Program, Aboriginal Pre-Health Program.
2010: Introduction of first-year cohort programmes, Systems One in Applied Sciences and BusOne, and SFU Nights and Weekends degree completion program.
2010: Letter of intent with City of Surrey, BC Hydro, and Powertech Labs Inc. to advance sustainability in Surrey through clean energy initiatives.
2011: Announcement of five-year funding for student entrepreneurship initiative, Venture Connection.

2011: Further facility expansion of 54,000 square feet from a \$10 million Canadian federal grant and creation of new facilities for research labs as well as science teaching labs.
2011: Announcement of SFU community classrooms in Surrey Central City Library.
2011: Successes in national research competitions: Grant of \$5 million for automotive research and new gerontology lab to house the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. First award of Canada Research Chair to an SFU Surrey faculty member in the School of Interactive Arts and Technology.
2013: Co-founding of Surrey's Innovation Boulevard, a partnership between health, business, higher education, and government creating new health technologies to improve peoples' lives. Focussed on medical devices, independent living, and digital health.
2013: City commitment to funding an industrial research chair in energy as part of its interest in supporting the university and building an economic cluster around the clean energy sector.

Adapted from a SFU Surrey campus brochure, "Highlights From the First 10 years".

Beginning in 2011, there were additional points of contact at the senior levels of SFU and the City of Surrey. The university's senior administrative participation in a city-led business mission to India in 2011 (Vice-President for Research, Dean of Applied Sciences, and faculty member from Mechatronics) was an important interaction mentioned by all three city representatives interviewed. The personal connections that resulted laid a foundation for deeper interaction with the Faculty of Applied Sciences and demonstrated the university's ability to open doors internationally.

The role of the executive director as a primary general contact point continued until 2012, when new SFU champions came to the forefront. The most prominent champion was a recruited research chair who has become a co-lead for Surrey's most important economic development initiative, Innovation Boulevard. The Dean of Applied Sciences and individual faculty in the School of Mechatronics also interacted directly with City of Surrey staff departments. A business mission to Israel resulted in further connections between the city and an Associate Vice-President, Research that continues to the present.

6.1.2 Reflecting on the Impact of the University

In the case of the SFU Surrey campus, the community's hope that the university would contribute to the local economy was made evident at the outset. In announcing the decision about the location of the permanent campus, the local newspaper reported that "For the first time ever, Surrey's going to have its own university, brand new student spaces, brand new research facilities, brand new technology programmes, brand new business opportunities to grow Surrey's economy and to grow jobs here right in the community. Campbell [the provincial premier] said the campus will really help Surrey city centre take off. He estimates economic spinoffs in the City at \$100 million per year" ("University will help Surrey 'take off' ", 2004).

A city staff report dated April 14, 2008, recommended the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the City of Surrey and SFU Surrey campus. The report highlighted key contributions of the campus and its further expansion: enrolling local high school graduates (increasing access and reducing costs for students able to live at home); building a strong city centre (reinforced by SFU's reputation and the attraction of international students, which would encourage all types of investment); providing an important meeting space, free public lectures, and children's summer camps; and providing value to business owners (giving them access to a well-educated workforce, easing recruitment of employees, and offering the potential for joint facilities).

At a campus announcement, the provincial government news release highlighted the intended economic benefits of the SFU Surrey campus as "the prestige of having a world-class university like SFU established permanently in the Central City complex, which will attract new tenants more easily as a result. Students and staff will live and shop in the area, creating more demand for consumer goods and generating further economic benefits for the region" (BC Office of the Premier, 2004).

Over a decade later, many of these hopes have been realized. The most immediate local impact has been a 63 percent increase in traffic at the shopping centre, a 57 percent increase in the immediate downtown population, and a fully leased office tower with 4,100 employees. A number of large tenants, including a health authority, cite the proximity to SFU as a key factor in their choice of location (Bill Rempel, VP And General Manager,

Blackwood Partners Management Corporation, Central City). Over a dozen residential towers surrounding the campus have been announced and constructed. Developers of the projects often trumpet proximity to the SFU Surrey campus and include adaptations of the “university district” brand for marketing purposes.

Beyond its impact on facilities and businesses surrounding the campus, SFU Surrey also has contributed to an improvement of almost 5 percent from 2003 to 2010 in the rates of secondary school students transitioning to post-secondary education (AVED, 2015).

The value the city has placed on accessing the expertise of the university has been discussed in the previous section. The city’s appreciation of the benefits of a research university evolved over the past decade through tangible demonstrations of these benefits. Two cited benefits are access to expertise, exemplified by SFU’s white papers for the city’s economic summit, and the ability to open doors, exemplified by the business mission to India. The importance of the SFU white papers prepared in 2008 was recently highlighted: “[Dr Catherine Murray’s] report was certainly a catalyst for us to explore and address this deficiency [in support for growth of not-for-profit arts groups]” (Email correspondence from Surrey Manager of Arts to SFU faculty member dated February 4, 2015). All three SFU authors of these papers are based at other SFU campuses and continue to remain involved in developments in the City of Surrey. To the city, the residency of the involved faculty members never became an issue.

What is more difficult to measure is the possible effect of the university on the branding of the City of Surrey, particularly with regard to the revitalization of the newly designated City Centre, which was previously a neighbourhood challenged by crime. The university’s place-making role in attracting other tenants and participants was noted in interviews with City of Surrey representatives throughout the years:

So the university has a name, and SFU Surrey is good for Surrey because people see research universities being located in areas that are vibrant and relevant. . . . It enhances this perception that the City of Surrey is a great place to be because SFU and the city are working well together. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

What we want in the city centre is that kind of energy, and SFU is creating for us that energy, and certainly, our early successes are showing that . . . [the university served as a] strong catalyst to attract early residential development, and secondary commercial development [will follow]. (Economic Development Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 17 May, 2011)

And the evolution started when SFU came here. I saw it first hand. The change in optics of the city centre—immediately they started to change. It's that centre of energy for the city centre. So everything kind of grew up around it. Everything positive you see out there I really think if it wasn't for SFU being in that location, it would be a long time coming. (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

The City of Surrey renamed an adjacent street “University Boulevard” as a tribute to the university but also as part of a rebranding effort intended to encourage the idea of a university district.

In interviews with City of Surrey and business representatives, the university's contributions to place-making and inward investment were felt to be of the greatest value. The university's place-making role has expanded beyond its physical impact on the built environment of Surrey's City Centre to creating a sense of place and excitement in Surrey in general. City representatives mentioned the prestige and reputation of SFU and said that SFU is helping Surrey create a positive climate for inward investment. One city representative thought the university played a larger role than the city in bringing in investment and encouraging companies to relocate to Surrey.

The university's place-making role was in fact a city-building role. By locating its campus in Surrey's City Centre, the university revitalized the area through the built environment and vibrant student population. This place-making role has expanded to improving the image of the City of Surrey as a whole. Inward investment has increased as a city priority, and SFU is working as integral partner in an economic development strategy aimed at attracting and retaining employees, residents, and commercial entities.

The creation of the SFU Surrey campus in 2002 has provided many benefits to SFU. While the SFU Burnaby campus remains the location for the majority of courses, the presence of a campus in Surrey, home to BC's largest school district, has contributed to the Surrey School District becoming SFU's top feeder district as of 2007 (SFU Institutional Research

and Planning, 2009). Over 30 new programmes and additional research capacity in areas such as clean energy, gerontology, and interactive arts and technology have contributed to SFU's research success over the past decade, measured in terms of grants awarded and research funding received, particularly by the School of Mechatronics. Research faculty from all three SFU campuses are cooperating with Surrey organizations and communities to address the many research challenges of a rapidly growing city receptive to tapping their expertise.

The SFU Surrey campus was a model for a community-engaged campus. Demonstration of the feasibility and benefits of this model and of a productive collaboration with the city government has helped guide SFU's new mission as "Canada's most community-engaged research university". Just as SFU Vancouver gave SFU the confidence to open a third campus, the success of SFU Surrey's community engagement objectives has fuelled a new institutional community engagement strategy.

6.1.2.1 Other Impacts: New Perspectives, New Networks

It is difficult to measure the impact of the university's provision of new perspectives to organizations in the City of Surrey. These new perspectives and the university's creation of neutral venues to encourage the exploration of new ideas were of great value according to city representatives interviewed in 2011:

It's education, higher learning, expanding my mind, broadening my horizon. . . . [Y]ou have clustering of people together, and great things happen with that because [of] diversity of thought. And people in the university are open to thinking about different things . . . in different ways and listening. . . . It's good to work with people who like to explore thoughts and ideas without fearing what the outcome of that comment is going to be. (City Senior Staff, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011)

What I get encouraged about is the fact that you will come and talk to me about things that are outside of the box. . . . Somebody has to take the bull by the horns and do something that allows us to accelerate the benefit that might otherwise take much, much longer to achieve on behalf of society. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

All of the interviews highlighted SFU's role in building a network that involves diverse organizations and individuals. Interviewees saw the SFU Surrey Community Advisory

Council not only as important to the university but also as a mechanism for enhancing community networks and relationships. The business representative interviewed commented, “It’s almost like a business advisory council for Surrey” (Third-Party CEO 2, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011). The city manager also emphasized the benefits of the interconnectedness of organizations such as the school district, city, and health authority, encouraging organizations to “not defend the way they do things but talk about how things should be done. . . . [W]e don’t have to—instead of thinking of ourselves as just in our traditional roles, [we] engage with business, engage with cities, engage with universities, engage with not-for-profits, engage with health authorities, and figure out how collectively we can partner to make things happen and [not] stay siloed” (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011).

6.2 Reflecting on the Dynamics of the Relationship

6.2.1 Characterizations

Although the relationship between SFU and the City of Surrey is young, having existed for only 12 years, interviewed representatives commonly characterized the relationship as very positive, a good working relationship, and an important one (“cherished”). Despite prodding, it was difficult to get participants to provide a negative aspect or an example of a negative incident: “But there was never a time where I felt . . . SFU was difficult to interact with. It has always been great, but it has just gotten better and better over the years. . . . My story is not candy coated, it’s just very real. This is a very real story. If there was something negative to say, I would be saying it” (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014). A former mayor said:

You know, honestly, I cannot think of [a negative aspect]. . . . I think this has to do with not only developing the relationship with a variety of people within the university, but in building on all of that, and if there [have] been any issues or anything that [has] come up, they get dealt with along the way]. . . . Every avenue that we have embarked upon, the university has been more than willing to accommodate. (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014)

The city manager, formerly the head of engineering, comments: “I seem to be drumming SFU’s drum, but I do think a lot of it” (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014). He describes the relationship as personal, incremental, and based on values:

To me, personal, meaning a lot of it is based on personal relationships—for example, my relationship with [the SFU Surrey executive director], which is long standing on different items. . . . But it is incremental too. It’s not like you knew exactly where our relationship had to be five years ago. . . . But based in values . . . it’s [a] very respectful relationship, understanding that each side has its own issues on the table. So when I talk to SFU, it’s not like I think they are just thinking SFU and don’t realize there’s a local context to what we’re doing here or things we’re trying to achieve for the City of Surrey. Doesn’t necessarily mean it always has to line up. But it always feels comfortable with the relationship. (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

The current university president sums up the relationship as follows:

The relationships that have developed between the university and the municipality are amazingly strong. Both think of each other ‘top of mind’ when pursuing objectives relating to Surrey. One of the very first things we consider is “How we can we partner with the municipality on this? Is this something that we can get the municipality to partner in or support? Is there some shared value or benefit that we can jointly pursue?” And I believe that the municipality looks to us in much the same way. As they move forward with their goals on clean energy or economic development or transportation, we’re top of mind for them. That’s not how municipal–university relationships normally work in a large metropolitan area. Our relationship is more typical of the relationship between a college and town council in a much smaller community, where the interdependence is driven by close personal connections as well as geography. (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014)

At all levels of the organizations, the university and city were viewed as having a good working relationship: “I think they believe in our capabilities and that’s something that needs to be built up over time” (SFU Faculty Member 2, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014).

6.2.2 Openness and Responsiveness

Openness and responsiveness on the part of the university and support from the city were constant themes brought up by the interviewed city and university representatives, with

many specific examples provided. A few of the city representatives discussed this openness:

I think it comes back to the relationship with the people that you have. So I had no qualms about calling yourself or calling [current president] or calling somebody on the phone and saying, “Here is something we want to do.” Whatever the case may be. So I think, again, that [connectedness] and availability.” (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014)

There is a sense of openness, that there is an open reception to listen to an idea and then a pragmatic evaluation of what that idea is. (City Senior Staff, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011)

Sometimes they bear fruit and sometimes not. But the important thing is [that] there is an effort in there to do so, right?” (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

[Simon Fraser University] doesn’t put up a lot of barriers. You guys have been so open. . . . I feel like—If I had an idea or a need that in one heartbeat, I could ask the university and fully expect to be engaged. I have never felt for a second that [there] would be a stall for me any way, shape, or form, never, and that’s in large method to the environment that [the SFU Surrey executive director] created; I just wouldn’t hesitate for a second. . . . I didn’t care if [there] is money attached to it. I still know I could have that conversation. So I freely believe that door is wide open.” (City Economic Development Officer 1, *pers. comm.*, 17 May, 2011)

I don’t know if it was a last-minute request, but you guys showed up. And it was quick. Frankly, it’s a bit of flyer too, and, you know, no one has time for kind of flyers, but you showed up, and I think that’s indicative of the relationship that we have and, you know, you made some time anyway. (City Senior Staff, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011)

I think one of the cherished relationships is with SFU and what we have been able to achieve through collaboration with SFU. And I’m still amazed by how open SFU is and how SFU reaches into the community and are so willing to partner. I don’t believe that there is an initiative that we brought forward, that is, an idea, that SFU has an incident that says yes, let’s do it, and then we have a team from SFU working in collaboration with us to make it go. And it works in the opposite direction as well. Where SFU brings us some initiatives ideas and we [are] always grateful to look with SFU. Still a little really surprised in a good way on how easy SFU is to work with. (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

University representatives also pointed out the open mindness of the city representatives and their willingness to engage with the university: “I think they’ve been very open-minded in the first place. . . . To actually come and work with the university. . . . They’re open to

new methods . . . that are a little outside of the box. I don't think it's traditional[ly] how a city operates to consider setting up a recent collaboration with a university instead of, like, hiring consultants" (SFU Faculty Member 2, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014). University staff also spoke about the ability to have much more easy-going conversations with city managers and planners who are open to conversations about strategies and opportunities (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).

As outlined in the history of the campus, an early effort was made to establish communication channels with the city and build the relationship: "But we moved quickly to establish all those formal processes, communication channels, and what have you. But the receptivity on the other side was enthusiastic in the long run. They wanted it to work" (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).

6.2.3 Connections at All Organizational Levels

Another characteristic of the SFU–City of Surrey relationship is that connections between representatives occur at all levels of the organization, including directly between university faculty and city staff members. A SFU faculty member comments:

I've been involved [in] working with individuals on different levels, and probably everybody in the City of Surrey operation [who is] doing engineer[ing]-related work. They know me and I know them and we talk. (SFU Faculty Member 2, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014)

Past interactions and successes encourage the communication:

We developed initiatives, we go forward to SFU and say, "Hey would you like to collaborate?" and it was always a yes, and then the team would be identified, and we'd start working with the professors and students. You know it still comes as a surprise to businesses that a university is available to them. (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

A faculty member's description of his project with the city provides a good example of how the opportunity unfolds over a period of time, starting with smaller successful communications and activities (SFU Faculty Member 2, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014). Key to this success were:

- support from the senior leadership of the city and university, including that of a senior city staff champion;
- a well-defined scope of activity in a priority area for the city;
- the ability to build on the initial success of a smaller project; and
- openness and ease of contact between staff and faculty.

Interviewees cited the involvement of leaders of both organizations as important for creating a supporting environment. Both university presidents that have served since SFU Surrey's inception have been actively involved in the community. The previous mayor of Surrey comments on the role of the mayor: "I think it all starts at the top. . . . I think that message certainly should come from the leaders of the city or the institution. It's important to create that environment and to really demonstrate that there is a good working relationship (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014).

6.2.4 Demonstration of Mutual Benefit and Common Strategic Goal

A powerful theme that emerged in all interviews with City of Surrey representatives was mutuality, illustrated by the following quotes from interviews conducted in 2011:

We are all going in the same direction, trying to achieve the same thing . . . not having the full strategy from the beginning. And I think the fact that we are collectively going to fall into this, some of [this] stuff is exciting and fun right? (City Senior Staff, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011)

We work in tandem together. . . . Success for the growth of the university is seen as important to the success of the community . . . more students . . . more businesses want to come here. They want to relocate. There's an interest. There's an excitement around Surrey. . . . As you grow, we grow. As we grow, you grow. (Third-Party CEO 2, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011)

Further examples of mutuality were provided in recent interviews:

The fact that we are able to work on a lease agreement for the library . . . it serves both our purposes, but [it]—again, to me it signalled that you value our city as a good partner. The fact that city hall wasn't close wasn't going to deter you from establishing that relationship. . . . It was partnering up on a wing and a prayer, but it was, like, okay . . . we would like to build a library bigger. We got stuck. We just make it work. It just really brings a lot of comfort for all the partners. And then you know it comes around

when you[re] looking for [a] lecture, theatre, or something—“Oh, sure, come on in to city hall.” (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

Alignment with an important goal of the city—the establishment of its city centre and the rebranding of Surrey—existed from the very beginning of the campus:

I see that as going down that same path, that what you are hoping for your institution in terms of research and prestige is exactly what we are hoping for as a city. So the marriage cannot be any tighter or any stronger. I just see it as natural. . . . because we’ve been sort of tied at the hip for so long in the same vision . . . and [that it has existed] across political spectrums, I think that is unusual. (City Economic Development Officer 1, *pers. comm.*, 17 May, 2011)

The comfort of the relationship and the knowledge of one another’s context were also highlighted: “I am implicitly support[ive] because there’s trustworthy individuals, I think, and everyone, again, is trying to achieve the same thing. Everyone knows where each other fits” (City Senior Staff, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011).

In a previous section, the early implementation of a number of interface structures and the designation of the SFU Surrey executive director’s office as a primary contact point were outlined. More interface structures and communication processes have evolved: “I think that things work well in Surrey not just because of the advisory committee, but because of multiple relationships and connections that have been formed, and because of the sense on the part of the municipality that they are implicated in the Surrey campus and its development. The university’s presence in Surrey is seen as being about them and their future. Thus they have a greater stake in it and responsibility to it” (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

6.2.5 Interfirm Adaptation and Learning

Over the past 12 years, the City of Surrey and SFU Surrey have evolved alongside one another and learned how to work together to support economic and social development. An early recollection of the city manager, responding to a question about what the city would like to see from the university, was that the city did not know what it needed: “We will grow up together.”

The City of Surrey is aware that the partnership with SFU is still evolving and that mutual learning is taking place: “We are at the infancy of what I see as a great partnership. . . . We are learning together, trying to figure out how to use our collective strength effectively” (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011).

The importance of taking risks and adapting to changing circumstances were identified in discussions with both City of Surrey and SFU representatives:

Well, how do we get there? Well, we are still working on that, but the fact that we are talking about it tells me that we are different. . . . Somebody has to take the bull by the horns and do something that allows us to accelerate the benefit that might otherwise take much, much longer to achieve on behalf of society. (Former City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

It's important that we both remain flexible, and whatever comes along, if what we've got in place doesn't work, let's invent something that works or try something, and if it doesn't work, try something else, because I think what we are doing is good but what I am learning—It's about opportunity and responding to opportunity. . . . [L]et's set up opportunities for communication to occur efficiently and listen to each other and [not] assume that yesterday's positions apply today if we learned something new today and don't worry about changing positions. . . . because we are prepared to roll with the punches, and if something comes up that requires a change, we react quickly, and I think the same thing is important to SFU Surrey, SFU as a university. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

6.2.6 Effort in Connecting to the City and to the Community

Weerts and Sandmann (2008) acknowledge that for urban campuses, language and the values of engagement are institutionalized earlier, due in part to the institutions' youth and their embeddedness in their cities. This certainly appears to be the case with the SFU Surrey campus. The university's efforts to connect with the community through its senior administration, staff, and faculty provided underlying support for the relationship with the city. “I think this is one of the strengths of SFU—is always an eye for linking in with the community. I think it's one of your mantras, but I think you live it too” (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014). Another interviewee agreed:

SFU has always had that very deep reach into the community, including to the city. My expectation was probably, like the average person, that the university is over here and the community is over here, and you know, if you want—you have to go to the university if you want any information, but the absolute fact that there is flow into the community via [the] university is what was a nice surprise and not an expectation. It just got better and better. (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

This approach was seen as “so different because [the university] is right in the heart of the downtown core and it engaged the business community here in Surrey, I mean with Central City being in a mall, I mean, who’d ever hear of anything like that. . . . So, I think that’s an integral part of the build-out and the economic development to afford the build-out for our downtown core. . . . That’s what it’s all about, and SFU plays an integral part in the community for the place-making and bringing people together from all varieties of life because you’ve integrate[d] yourself into the community so well. . . . [T]he support of the business community like you have is, I believe, unheard of” (Third-Party CEO 2, *pers. comm.*, 11 May, 2011).

This effort helped address barriers to the local government and other organizations understanding what the university had to offer and knowing how to engage with this expertise:

I think there’s still more that can be done by universities generally to market what they do and what’s available to . . . creating probably better points of connection . . . building portals that are designed so that it’s almost like plug and play, where if someone walks in and they sort of say, ‘Well, you know, we are struggling with this in our community. What can you do for us?’ . . . there’s an immediate connection with someone in the university [who] is engaged in the relevant realm [and] can say, ‘This is what we can do’ . . . I think that’s where there’s a bit of a lack right now . . . not for lack of issues that need to be studied, but for lack of understanding as to how to engage the university (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

The city values the university’s efforts to connect not only to the city but also to the general community:

[The] involvement of you and others from SFU [in] city-related business that [goes] beyond the university’s business —like the downtown Surrey Downtown BIA [Business Improvement Association] involvement, the board of trade involvement—Your attendance [at] a lot of things that have nothing to do with the university but are

important to a city . . . in my opinion demonstrate a commitment of the university to build the city and not just . . . the university. (Former City Manager, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011)

The university's approach was not seen as a traditional one given its multi-campus and multi-facility activities and the attention played to education, research, as well as community building.

6.2.7 Campus Location and Identity with Surrey

Many individuals interviewed pointed to the university's location in Surrey's designated city centre as a critical factor in its success in the relationship with the City of Surrey:

I think SFU has become more and more determined to be that university that has integrated with the community—and the fact that SFU is here in our city centre, so accessible . . . (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

I'm quite amazed, actually, it's really cool how SFU seems to be very agile and not be very physically restricted to geography or a campus and seems to have figured that out really well. . . . I think it's critical for a vibrant city. The people it attracts and keeps in it, the level of energy. . . . [T]he city centre would not be what it is without all the students we have. There is no doubt about it in my mind. . . . So then I think it is forward-thinking of SFU instead of thinking a bit more insular geography-wise, [to think] "This is our campus. Everyone has to come to us." (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

The current SFU president acknowledges the Surrey campus's identification with Surrey and contrasts it with the Burnaby campus:

The Burnaby campus is by far the largest and delivers programs and services that support the entire university and its regional and international presence. It therefore lacks the same community connection and identity as the Surrey campus. There's much more community identity to the Surrey campus and to its programming. It's more geographically contained in the programs and services it provides. I'm not sure how one could go about disaggregating that part of the Burnaby campus which serves Burnaby and that part which serves the rest of the university. (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014)

6.2.8 Governance and Provincial Interplay

In the planning of SFU Surrey, there were a few issues of tension between the province and city government. The City of Surrey had donated the original land for the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC) project. When the province made the decision to wind down TechBC's, ICBC also signed leases at below-market rate with tenants, destroying the rent structure for other commercial tenants within the city. The province then also further funded the project to enable ICBC to complete the fit-out and enter into leases. No funding was made available to SFU to acquire any of the floors at Central City. "This was widely seen by the city as proof that the province had no real commitment to a research university in North Surrey" (Former SFU Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 22 February, 2014).

The City of Surrey has not hesitated in supporting the development of the SFU Surrey campus in making monetary contributions and playing a strong advocacy role in supporting the university's efforts with other levels of government. Over the years the mayor's or city manager's office has written almost a dozen support letters and several proposals have succeeded due to this support. As early as 2004, the city was advocating on the university's behalf ("I've had a good conversation with the DM [Deputy Minister] in AVED [Advanced Education], so I'm not sure we need the Mayor to take it up with the Premier" (SFU's President Michael Stevenson in an email on 6 December, 2004). In a 2012 letter to the provincial Ministers of Finance, Advanced Education, and Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation, the mayor stated her support for further growth of the campus: "Further expansion in [clean energy and health] will support local industries and new companies by providing access to students, faculty, and research facilities. [Simon Fraser University]—Surrey has been a key partner in the City of Surrey's transformation since it opened 10 years ago. Its expansion will address a critical seat shortage in the region, will drive increased rates of post-secondary education, and will result in sustained economic development [and] long-term employment in high-value industries and will further catalyse growth in our downtown core. The City of Surrey fully supports SFU's expansion."

The former director of government relations speaks of the benefit of this municipal role of advocacy:

[W]hen you've another level of government that is prepared to actually lobby [on] your behalf with another level of government and with the MPs [members of parliament], I

mean, you know, the local member of [parliament] might not have been [interested], but when the mayor phoned up, they were interested. (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014)

The university also advocated on behalf of the city, but not as frequently. At times, the relationship between the province and SFU was challenging, given SFU's push for a suitable permanent campus ("[Things] really kind of went a little bit sideways between the premier and [SFU president] because, you know, the mandate of the [SFU president] was not to make the province look good, it was to ensure that the students out here got the best facilities [for] education they could get, and they couldn't do it out of a department store [first leased facility for SFU Surrey]" (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 4, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014).)

6.3 Assessment of Interface Structures and Management Processes

In a previous section, the early implementation of a number of interface structures and the designation of the SFU Surrey executive director's office as a primary contact point were outlined. Additional interface structures and communication processes have evolved: "I think one of the reasons things work well in Surrey is not just because of the advisory committee but [because] generally there has been—through a multiple of reasons and structures—[the sense] on the part of the municipality [that] they are implicated in the Surrey campus and its development. That development is about them and about their future or equates to it. They have a greater stake in it and responsibility to it. . . ." (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

In her interview, the former mayor also spoke of the integration of the university and the city and the university's involvement with existing city governance structures:

You're again demonstrating to the people around the table that they are part of the city. . . . [I]t's not a separate entity. . . . I often find if you have a separate committee, [it] doesn't always filter down to the work that's being done. And I think if it's an integrated approach, then it's just clearly demonstrated that yes, the university should be sitting on this committee and we should be working together. . . . (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014).

The openness of the City of Surrey to adapting to new opportunities was also mentioned: “It’s a growing experience. . . . [W]e are learning together, trying to figure out how to use our collective strength effectively to, you know. . . . [M]y sense is that we are still learning a bit about that and through . . . ongoing discussion, I think we will better understand how we can support each other” (Former City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 12 May, 2011).

In the remainder of this chapter, various interface mechanisms and communication processes will be discussed.

6.3.1 SFU Community Advisory Council and City Committees

The SFU Surrey Community Advisory Council was established at the inception of the Surrey campus. The city manager has been an active participant along with other leaders of business and non-profit organizations, including the school district and health authority. Both city managers and current and past university presidents express their opinion that the Advisory Council has positive value:

I think the indirect benefit of that is very high. The direct benefit is less obvious. It’s not like it’s the type of group that [has] 10 ‘to do’s’ [and] after that meeting, everyone’s going to be working towards a single project or a single thing and all that. So the challenge is to keep people interested and engaged. (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014)

The advisory council is not just a two-way forum for the university and the municipality; it incorporates diverse voices and perspectives from throughout the community. I think it works extraordinarily well, and it does so in part because it encourages the municipality to see the university as providing a multiplicity of benefits not just to the municipal government, but to the entire community, including the business community. The discussions that take place are not just about the municipality and the university; they involve the broader interests of the community. This widens the discussion, focuses the discussion on community building, and encourages the university and the municipality to see themselves as participants in a larger process. (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014)

The only issue raised about the Advisory Council was the lack of transfer of knowledge from the city participant to other city staff unless there are specific action items.

6.3.2 Relationship Building Across Different Organizational Levels

Through the years, new contact people and champions of the relationship have arisen along with new strategic initiatives. These include the Dean of Applied Sciences, a research chair, and more recently, an Associate Vice-President, Research. Staff from each organization also jointly work on events and projects.

The interviews highlighted the importance of connections between individuals and the less formal interactions: “I think there are formal meetings. . . .but there are formal structures of interaction with the City of Surrey, but they are probably outnumbered by tens of hundreds of informal interactions where both parties are very much trying to work towards a common vision” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

6.3.3 The Role of University Presidents and City Mayors

Interviewees saw university presidents and city mayors as playing critical roles in setting the environment for the university–city collaboration. The former mayor of Surrey comments: “It’s important to create that environment and to really demonstrate that there is a good working relationship. I think from that, people will realize that we have been working together, we are working together, and we’ll continue working together” (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014).

The current president speaks of his role as providing encouragement for “students, researchers and staff to pursue relationships with municipalities that can add capacity and value. . . . I think the relationship [for] historical reasons and personality reasons has been conducted much more at the executive sector or associate vice-president level. I have tried to provide some support where I can and where I thought I was useful. But it hasn’t been as direct a relationship . . . so it’s kind of perplexing because in some ways that’s our closest relationship” (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

The relationships between the two university presidents who have held the position since 2002 and the two mayors who served during that period have been cordial but not particularly close. There are a number of possible explanations for less need for a more involved relationship. One possible explanation is the existence of a good relationship

between the city manager and the mayor that enables the city manager to represent the views of the mayor and council. Another explanation for one of the more distant mayor–president relationships was the political challenges a former university president was facing: “[W]ell, it was very handy that [the executive director was] able to establish such a good relationship with [the mayor], because I think my own sense of it was that very early on, [the mayor] knew that I had some difficulties with the premier. She didn’t want to dirty her copy . . . too much” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).

Faculty members value the involvement and attention of the president and mayor and feel that the leadership sets the stage for a shared vision at different levels of the organization and supports staff to take risks. Knowing the mayor on a personal level was seen as positive.

6.3.4 Liaison People or Boundary Spanners

The assignment of a primary contact person for the relationship was highlighted in interviews: “I know the people, but I would probably phone [the executive director] first. . . . I think [the executive director is] well connected [to] us” (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 27 October, 2014). This may have reduced the requirement for extensive involvement of the university president, although the president’s commitment to participating in key meetings was critical: “I would dutiful[ly] attend these meetings. . . . I need to make it very clear that I’m personally invested in these things. But people locally and [the executive director] more than any did the spadework. It was relatively easy to manage” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).

While city staff were knowledgeable about the primary contact person, not all university staff were aware of this arrangement: “There doesn’t seem to be that one university contact that maintains that relationship with the city. . . . Knowing what is going on would be good” (University Staff, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014).

Both former presidents and the current president highlighted the benefit of key liaison people for the campuses. The current president also added the need for the person to have an administrative role with respect to programming and infrastructure and the benefit of having someone on the ground working “day in and day out with the relationship in

mind” (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014). The former mayor of the City of Surrey spoke to the importance of choosing a liaison person with the right skill set: “You have to have the right characteristics for the person in the role with community engagement. [The SFU Surrey executive director was] at all the functions, the Board of Trade, community events, and everywhere, always doing that outreach. That positioned, leveraged, and propelled the relationship that we enjoy today” (Former Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 14 January, 2014).

6.3.5 Informal/Social Opportunities and Individual Relationships

While interviewees from the City of Surrey and SFU spoke of respect and trust and making connections, they did express a preference for social opportunities or personally getting to know people from the other organization. Staff from each organization know each other and interact well on an informal and frequent basis: “I think that for me, the ease of the day-to-day interaction with SFU is what I cherish the most” (City Economic Development Officer 2, *pers. comm.*, 5 September, 2014). “They know me, and I know them, and we talk” (SFU Faculty Member 2, *pers. comm.*, 23 July, 2014). The function of individuals who connected the various organizations was mentioned by several individuals.

6.3.6 Use of Third-Party Organizations

Through cross-committee memberships, SFU Surrey representatives keep informed of and interact with city elected officials and staff in other venues. These include the Surrey Board of Trade and the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Associations. The importance of these communication channels was raised earlier. Community events, forums, and conferences also provide opportunities to informally raise issues or get a reaction to a possible project.

6.4 Conclusions: The City of Surrey–SFU Collaboration

The SFU–City of Surrey collaboration is perceived as a very positive and successful one by both organizations. This chapter documented the shared strategic purpose that existed from the outset by a local government eager to brand their city centre and generate economic development opportunities as well as a university campus committed to connect with the community and play a role in economic and social development. The leaders of each organization created a supportive environment to encourage the collaboration and for staff to take risks.

The chapter also highlights the importance of establishing openness and a practice of responsiveness on the part of both organizations. The SFU Surrey Executive Director and Surrey City Manager embraced the liaison role in the beginning of the relationship resulting in identifying valuable areas where SFU could contribute. This role over time was subsumed by the involvement of individuals at all levels of each organization, including faculty members and city department heads and staff, as the research capacity of SFU was utilised. The integration of representatives from the university in existing city committees and a university committee that included third party organizations were also useful in identifying opportunities and creating further communication opportunities.

The SFU–City of Surrey collaboration is a relatively short one of twelve years in comparison to the City of Burnaby relationship that spans almost fifty years. In the next chapter, these two relationships will be compared for similarities and differences. The findings will be discussed in light of the research literature and the thesis will conclude with the implications for practice.

Chapter Seven:

Conclusions: Contrasting the Two City Collaborations

This chapter summarizes the findings of the case studies of SFU's relationships with the City of Surrey and City of Burnaby. The similarities and differences are considered to deepen an understanding of the factors that influence the collaboration between a university and a city, and the evidence is compared to the body of literature on good and bad practices.

The findings are organized according to the first two research sub-questions: How do the context of a city and university and their history of past interaction between them influence the goals and structure of the collaboration? What management processes are important for developing and maintaining or re-establishing trust and building confidence in a university–city collaboration? Contributions to the literature are described.

The final section responds to the third research sub-question by summarizing the practical implications for universities and cities that wish to build successful collaborations for regional economic development or other purposes.

7.1 Comparing the Two Cases

The current dynamics of SFU's collaborations with the City of Burnaby and the City of Surrey are the result of a complex interplay of history, context, strategic goals and roles, and management processes. The major differences between the two cases are summarized in the following tables. Table 9 contrasts the history, context, and strategic factor and Table 10, the management processes.

Table 9: SFU–City Relationships, History, Context, and Strategic Factors

Factor	Burnaby	Surrey
History	Negative critical incident has impacted the dynamics of the relationship. Relationship perceived as distant.	No negative incidents to date. All interactions and project outcomes are positive. Relationship is seen as productive and respectful.
Context		
Origin and Mission	No explicit or proactive regional mission in economic development at founding or in first decades	Original mission explicitly calls for university involvement in regional economic development
University Location	Location on isolated mountaintop at eastern border has not encouraged interaction or identification with Burnaby community and vice-versa	Urban setting in designated City Centre allows for greater interaction with city staff and elected officials as well as with community
University Programmes	Initial programmes were in general arts and sciences but have since expanded to include areas such as applied sciences, health sciences, and environment	Majority of programmes benefit from strong connection with industry and external organizations including engineering, applied sciences, and education
Organizational Culture	The culture of Burnaby as a proud working-class city and SFU as a provincial academic institution may have led to less interest in closer collaboration	A young city needing to “stretch and innovate” (Former Mayor, <i>pers. comm.</i> , 14 January, 2014) creates a receptive collaborator
Planning Issues	The larger Burnaby campus led to more planning and transportation conflicts	Few planning issues to date as the smaller campus is within a mixed-use complex
Economic Development Capacity and Efforts	The city contracts economic development to the Burnaby Board of Trade. Location adjacent to Vancouver is a major benefit to retaining and growing companies.	City has prioritized economic development to increase business tax revenue relative to property tax revenue. Branding of the city is a major thrust.

Factor	Burnaby	Surrey
Strategic Factors		
Strategic Purpose/Mutual Goal	City has not identified a mutual interest or specific role for SFU in regional economic, cultural, or social development. The university has not identified a key role for the City of Burnaby in furthering its objectives. UniverCity is likely the most promising candidate.	Shared vision for Surrey City Centre. Major role for the city in advocating for resources for the university from other levels of government. University is a co-lead on key economic development initiatives.
Place-Making Role	Not evident (physical location and lack of shared identity are barriers)	University is fundamental to the efforts in the branding and energy of Surrey City Centre
Expectations	No expectation of a more proactive role for either party in the collaboration. There is a feeling of a lack of appreciation for past contributions by both parties.	Positive results in a succession of projects has led to the expectation of continued involvement at greater levels and interest in expanding scope of collaboration to focus on social issues
Openness and Effort in University–City Collaboration	No major joint projects or ongoing activity inviting the other party to assist	Open to approaching and working with one another and extremely responsive to requests of the other organization
Effort in General Community Engagement	No major institutional effort in linking with the community other than through cooperative education programmes	Major effort has been made to participate in the key community and business organizations and initiatives in Surrey

Table 10: SFU–City Relationships, Management Processes

Factor	Burnaby	Surrey
Liaison Structures	Formal bilateral liaison committee that meets up to 2 times a year, with some lapses	SFU Surrey Community Advisory Council includes city manager and representatives from business and community. Meets 3 times a year.
Liaison Person	Government relations staff member for approximately a decade	Executive Director took on the responsibility of managing the relationship with the City of Surrey
Committee Memberships	A few examples of SFU participation on city committees. No city representatives on SFU committees.	University representatives on many committees. City manager on SFU committee.
Level of Interaction	Most interaction takes place at senior organizational levels. Limited faculty involvement.	Interaction between the city and university takes place at various levels including at the department and individual faculty-staff level
Relationship Between Mayors and President	Presidents and mayors have built direct relationships and meet from time to time. Irregular meetings.	Presidents and mayors have built direct relationships and meet from time to time. Irregular meetings.
Third-Party Organizations	Limited contact except with Burnaby Board of Trade	University's involvement in other community and business organizations also supports communication
Informal Interactions	Limited effort and contact. Greater city appreciation of informal and social interactions	Personal respect established and informal interactions. Few social relationships.
Initial Approach with Smaller Successes, Demonstrating Value	Success with UniverCity but hesitancy to enter into projects or joint efforts	Track record of small successes and working out minor incidents. Demonstrated value of SFU by identifying areas where the university could assist and drawing on SFU expertise from any campus.

The differences in shared vision are paramount. From the outset, the university and the City of Surrey had a shared vision of revitalizing a newly designated City Centre and supporting economic development. In the case of the much longer relationship with the

City of Burnaby, the dispute over land—perhaps compounded by a lack of recognition for the original donation—has had an enduring impact. An SFU representative contrasted the situations: “It’s fundamental and key to [the City of Surrey’s] plan to develop a [city centre]. . . . [With the] City of Burnaby . . . we could disappear tomorrow, Burnaby Mountain slides into a broad inlet or whatever—it wouldn’t really affect the rest of the City of Burnaby very much. They [would] continue on quite happily” (Former SFU Senior Staff Member 3, *pers. comm.*, 3 October, 2014).

As shown by the SFU–City of Surrey case, the management processes that help identify a shared goal and strategy, an understanding of most appropriate roles for a university, and the confidence of parties to work together are critical. These processes are likely even more important when the relationship needs to overcome a negative historical incident, an isolated geographic location, or tensions over governance and transactional issues.

At the beginning of the effort to build the collaboration, each organization needs to establish openness, responsiveness, and commitment. This happened in the case of the City of Surrey, given its need to catch up to other cities and further its economic development goals and its openness to partner with a university to achieve these goals. The university’s value to the City of Burnaby may lie in other domains of interactions, given that the city subcontracts its economic development to a third party.

This study found the following processes to be important for building and sustaining a collaboration:

- Use of one or more liaison people with the appropriate skills, mandate, and access to resources;
- Involvement of representatives at different levels of an organization, especially faculty who provide access to the university’s research capacity;
- Integration with an organization’s existing collaboration and management mechanisms including committees and utilisation of third-party organizations as additional avenues for interaction and cooperation and to provide further understanding of city context and appropriate university roles;
- Persistence in demonstrating the value of the university’s involvement and contributions and a track record of smaller successes leading to more

ambitious projects. Working out any minor incidents builds confidence in and expectations for the collaboration over time; and

- Implementation of other trust-building processes identified in the literature, such as goal setting, risk taking, and attribution.

It is important to assign one or more university liaison persons to guide the development of the collaboration. The position and role of this person(s) can change over time. In an initial relationship, it is important for the person to have the appropriate skills and administrative position in order to find the most valued opportunities in which the university can take part. The liaison person needs to have the knowledge and credibility to reach back into the university to link faculty and staff to identified needs and projects. In the City of Surrey relationship, the active involvement of the city manager as the city's key liaison person was important at the beginning, but after a decade of experience and interaction, the liaison function has become shared among a number of university and city staff. As in the case of plant life, this diversification may also be evidence of a healthy relationship. Multiple channels and "foot bridges" are built on formal agreements and relationships at the senior levels. In the case of the City of Surrey, the relationships of the city mayor, councillors, and staff with university senior administrators, including a dean, the executive director, staff, and faculty, are all positive and perceived as productive.

A good one-on-one relationship between the university president and city mayor as well as a bilateral committee to coordinate the collaboration are useful but are not sufficient to advance a collaboration. However, the university president and city mayor can help to establish an environment that encourages the collaboration. For the Surrey campus, the overall direction and vision of community engagement had encouraged staff and faculty to engage with the city, community, and business organizations. While community engagement has been SFU's institutional mission and vision for a few years,¹² the history of the land dispute, the long history of minimal interaction, and other factors identified in further sections of this chapter have not yet led to positive results in Burnaby.

¹² The university's evolution as an "engaged university" has recently been described in Petter *et al.*, 2015.

7.2 Evidence in Relation to Practices from the Literature Review

The two cases provide support for other researchers' conclusions about good and bad practices and important processes that take place in collaborations. The findings also provide elaborations to existing theories and constructs.

Many good practices identified through the literature review are evidenced in the Surrey relationship. The importance of liaison people or boundary spanners and identification of their necessary skills and responsibilities have been discussed by a number of researchers (Atkins *et al.*, 1999; Meyer, 2010; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008; Reichert, 2006; Williams, 2002). While most of the researchers focus on an individual, the SFU–City of Surrey collaborations illustrates the shared responsibility of a number of boundary spanners (Radin, 1996 as cited in Thomson & Perry, 2006). For research universities, accessing the research capability through the involvement of faculty, faculty deans, and other senior staff and administrators is of great benefit. The position of the liaison person or boundary spanner in a city also appears to be important. The involvement of the city manager and city department heads as champions contributes to success in identifying and carrying out joint projects. The case of the Surrey relationship affirmed the benefits of interaction at different levels of organizations, which was highlighted by Virtanen (2002). The necessity for the top level of leadership to be actively engaged was challenged by the findings but the benefit of the leadership in creating an environment that encourages collaboration is important.

Das and Teng's (1998) list of trust and control mechanisms used in strategic alliances includes risk taking, equity preservation, communication, and some level of interfirm adaptation. These were all in evidence in the City of Surrey collaboration but not in the City of Burnaby relationship. The control mechanisms of forming expectations and setting specific and challenging goals are not explicit activities but occur in Surrey through a variety of multi-level relationships and initiatives, with periodic meetings between the city mayor and university president to confirm priorities. Organizational culture blending and formation of a system of shared values and norms that define appropriate attitudes and behaviours have taken place; these values and norms include openness, responsiveness, collaboration, and innovation. The SFU–City of Surrey collaboration moves into the more transformational end of the spectrum described by Enos and Morton (2003); here, activity

expands beyond discrete projects and partners can accurately represent each other's interests. While Goddard and Kempton's (2011) definitions of *transactional* and *transformation* differ from those of Enos and Morton (2003), the SFU–City of Surrey collaboration reinforces the argument that a transformational relationship allows transactional issues to be dealt with in a much more productive and positive manner. Despite the successful relationship with the City of Surrey, given the long-term nature of universities and university–city relationships, inevitable challenges will arise, and goals will change. A continuous effort must be made to adapt to changes and reaffirm the relationship.

While the negative incident in the history of the City of Burnaby relationship still influences current dynamics, the lack of a shared vision or a clear strategic and mutual benefit to the relationship is the greatest barrier. SFU needs to determine the most valued roles to take in the social, economic, and cultural life of Burnaby. To achieve its mission to be Canada's most community engaged research university, SFU must expand and deepen relationships directly with businesses and non-profit organizations in Burnaby while slowly rebuilding its relationship with the City of Burnaby.

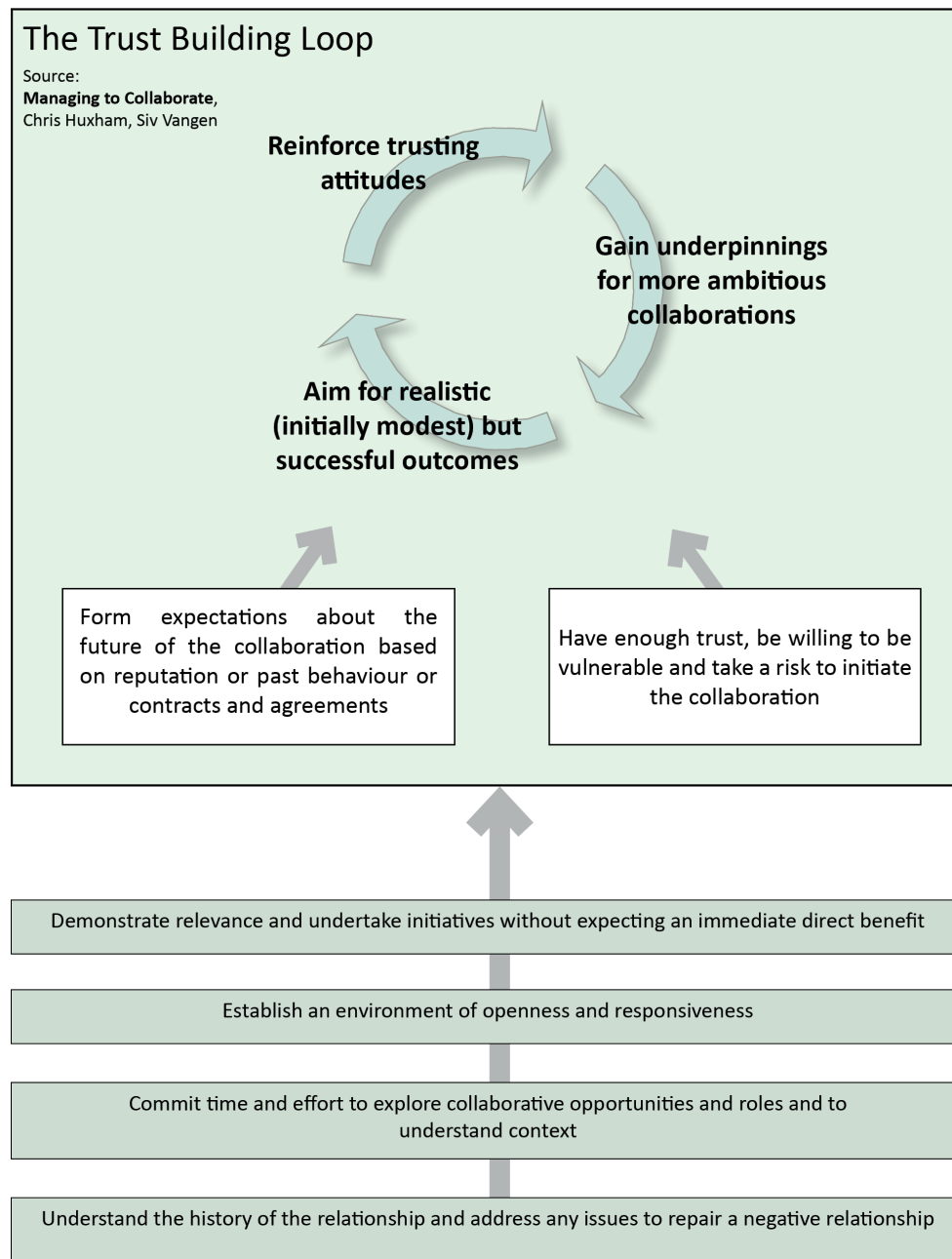
In the case of the City of Burnaby–SFU relationship, formal and informal face-to-face contacts and repeated interactions over time are not the norm (Hutchinson & Huberman, 1993 as cited in Weerts & Sandmann, 2008; Bruneel *et al.*, 2010). However, increasing the frequency of contact and revising management structures alone will not have an impact. As Thomson and Perry (2006) caution, without mutual benefits, not even greater information-sharing activities would lead to collaboration. Neither organization has a significant degree of commitment or investment. Even if a mutual need were identified, inertia and the absence of trust would have to be considered, given the collaboration's perceived lack of past success. The perception of a lack of responsiveness on both sides has reduced confidence and willingness to take risks (Woods & Gary, 1991; Thomson & Perry, 2006).

Huxham and Vangen's (2005) trust-building loop step, "Have enough trust, be willing to be vulnerable, and take a risk to initiate the collaboration", does not exist in City of Burnaby–SFU relationship. Neither organization is open to working with the other to enter the loop at any point. Because an on-ramp is necessary for some university–city collaborations, a

component needs be added to this model as illustrated in Figure 5. I would characterize this component as a series of processes that demonstrate responsiveness, relevance, and benefit and establish appropriate roles and champions. Without this on-ramp, there is no way to break the vicious circle in which universities or cities choose not to dedicate resources to a collaboration because they do not perceive a strategic purpose and cannot find a strategic purpose because they have not dedicated the time and resources.

The SFU–City of Burnaby relationship would still benefit from greater expectations for at least exploring collaborative opportunities. As Abodor (2005) argues, there may be an optimal level of expectations for building trust. A level that is too high or too low can have a negative impact on trust building.

Figure 5: The On-Ramp to the Trust-(Re) Building Loop



The various life cycles of relationships (Davies, 2012; Kale & Singh, 2009) do not appear to apply to the City of Burnaby–SFU relationship. There is a question of whether it is a collaboration given the absence of overall goals and joint activities. However, the younger City of Surrey–SFU relationship appears to be in a combination of design & development and growth phases that Davies (2012) predicts will begin to require additional procedures

and structures as well as norms and traditions. This has begun to occur in initiatives like Innovation Boulevard as the numbers of partners and projects are outstripping the administrative capacity of the city and existing management structures.

The literature primarily provides case studies of successful relationships with proactive and engaged participating organizations. This study has revealed another type of relationship that challenges the belief in the need for a strong, proactive collaboration in economic development or other domains. Despite the lack of a trusting relationship with the City of Burnaby and the university's less explicit role in economic development initiatives, SFU Burnaby has had a major impact on the city.¹³ Others who have studied the roles of universities maintain that they should not be "motors for economic development" and instead argue that "the best way for universities to put wind in the sail of their regions is by remaining true to their original mission: training students and conducting research. If they can do these two things well, knowledge mobilization will be the ripple effect" (M. Polese as cited in Lambert-Chan, 2008, p. 21). A minimalist relationship that allows for a peaceful coexistence might be a desirable state for some university-local government relationships. The SFU–City of Burnaby relationship can be classified as a cooperating (when necessary) relationship (Gajda, 2004) or as distant interaction, which as Davies (2012) explains is characterized by greater autonomy and limited obligations. However, while the effort in maintaining this peaceful co-existence is minimal, there needs to be a slightly higher level of readiness or openness to opportunities and some expectation of a benefit from collaborating. This might also be a state between transactional and transformational. I would label this desired state as respectful and responsive.

7.3 Research Contributions and Limitations

These two case studies and their comparison add to the body of literature on collaborations by providing a study of a relationship between two public-sector entities at the post-formation stage in a Canadian setting. This study contributes to the limited

¹³ A former SFU president comments on this perspective: "[I]n terms of what a university does to help build an economy and a social structure and a democracy and all of these good things about renewal and learning . . . my hunch is that we probably serve Burnaby every bit as well as we serve Vancouver or Surrey" (Former President 1, pers. comm., 9 May, 2014).

literature on strategic university–city collaborations for economic development, an area of growing interest.

To improve understanding of the “doing of collaboration” (Thomson & Perry, 2006), the study of these cases addresses the lack of studies of management and communication processes in collaborations. While the need for idealized processes such as open communication is accepted, a better understanding of how these processes can be accomplished in practice is needed. This understanding has been gained from personal experiences, interviews with a range of participants, and a detailed history of two relationships. The study attempts to integrate a number of bodies of literature and take into account both external factors, such as how context influences the roles a university and city play in economic development, while also considering some of the internal issues involved when a university makes changes to adapt to a situation. This was a gap in knowledge identified by Goddard and Vallance (2013).

The study provides two relatively detailed historical accounts constructed through secondary and primary data in order to provide an understanding of the dynamics of those relationships over time. My findings support the view of the complexity and the many challenges that make it difficult to achieve mutual trust and collaborations that both participating organizations perceive as successful. The study reinforces the views of Huxham (2003, pp. 420–421) that “making collaboration work effectively is highly resource consuming and often painful. . . . [D]on’t do it unless you have to” and Harkavy (2000, p. 3) that “[t]o make the case for university/community partnerships is easy to do. The hard thing is to figure out how to do it. The hardest part of all, of course, is to actually get it done.” I would add this advice: collaboration and the processes that support it are resource intensive but beneficial for cities and universities in cases in which a strategic objective is identified. If a strategic objective has not yet been identified, a peaceful, respectful relationship is beneficial for resolving transactional issues. In order to be ready to identify emergent strategic opportunities, effort must be allocated to establish openness, responsiveness and relevance.

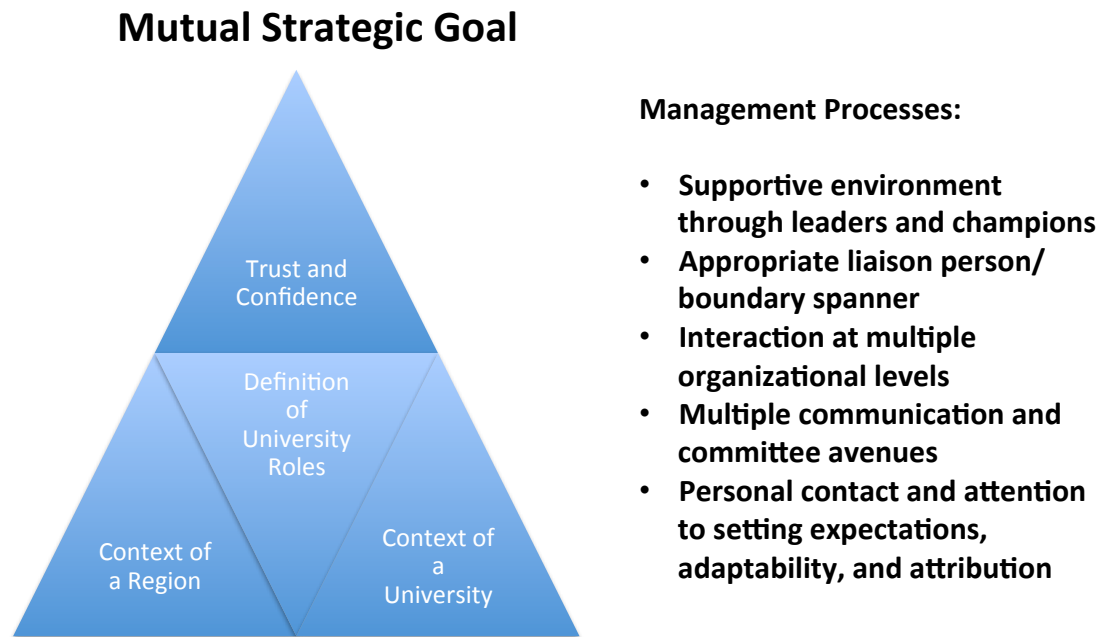
As additions my study makes to previous theories and constructs, in Figure 5, I suggested an additional stage, the “on-ramp” to the trust-building loop of Huxham and Vangen (2005). In the table below, I have revised the list of factors in university–city collaborations

presented in Chapter 3 with the insights from the two cases. The revision includes the elevation of strategic intent in importance and allowance for emerging strategy. Several other management processes, such as creating an environment for collaboration and facilitating interaction at different levels, are identified. The trust building processes remain as important factors.

Table 11: Summary of Important Factors in University–City Collaborations

Antecedents
<p>Context of the region:</p> <p>Influences the strategic importance of collaboration and the roles a city and university play in regional economic development</p> <p>Context of the university:</p> <p>Influences the strategic importance of collaboration and the roles a university plays in regional economic development</p> <p>History of the relationship:</p> <p>Influences the level of trust and confidence in the collaboration and expectations, especially where a negative incident has occurred</p>
Mutual Strategic Goal
<p>The centrality of the collaboration influences the commitment of the organizations and willingness to dedicate resources to maintaining the collaboration. This strategic goal may not be established at the beginning of the relationship but can emerge as the university and city better understand needs and capabilities and demonstrate relevance.</p>
Critical Management Processes
<p>Commitment of organizational leaders to place effort into the collaboration and create an environment of openness and responsiveness and support of taking risks. Champions of the relationship in key departments and areas.</p> <p>Liaison people/boundary spanners with appropriate skills, mandate, and access to resources to identify and address city needs that utilize the research capacity of the university</p> <p>Encouragement of interaction at multiple levels of the organization through participation/integration with existing committees and initiatives and special-purpose structures that encourage a range of participating institutions</p> <p>Frequent personal contact and attention to trust-building processes to seek mutuality, set expectations, attribute credit, and encourage adaptability</p>

Figure 6: Graphic of Important Factors in University–City Collaborations



This study has several limitations. The Canadian local government context and the multi-campus nature of SFU may not apply to other universities and cities. Interactions occur between many individuals at many points in time in collaborations between large organizations, especially decentralized universities. Further interviews—for example, with provincial representatives or students—might have revealed other perspectives and explanations. Interviews also relied on the respondents' ability to recall events and incidents. The ethical challenge of being an active participant in one of the case studies was discussed in a previous chapter. While one of the benefits of my involvement was good access to people and documents, I may have avoided more challenging questions or the inclusion of negative comments to not put colleagues and local government officials in a difficult position. I also did not wish to attribute success or failure to my actions and could have reduced the importance of the role I played in one of the case studies.

Further research that examines the social and informal processes in use and longitudinal studies that consider situations in which trust needs to be repaired would be useful to guide practice. Research that documents the process of collaboration as it develops over an extended time period would add to the literature. The document review conducted for

this thesis was useful in analysing the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship, especially given the frank opinions expressed in internal memos. Today, the use of email correspondence and the hesitation to document opinions and controversies given access to information legislation policies and greater public scrutiny eliminate this rich source of data.

The impact of the differences in organizational culture between cities is an area for further exploration. One unexplained finding is the importance City of Burnaby representatives place on social relationships and relatability of individuals. This may be the result of the organizational culture of the city as part of its working class distinctiveness. The independent and often “us versus them” culture may be a barrier to collaboration in comparison to the City of Surrey’s eagerness to be innovative and catch up to the progress of other cities. Another possible explanation is that the negative history and absence of a mutual strategic goal encourages a desire to build trust at the individual level before considering an institutional relationship.

An interesting area of further research would be the interaction of the various organizational levels of both organizations and the adaptations each organization makes in response to a positive and deep collaboration. The SFU-City of Surrey relationship has shown that the involvement at mid- or lower levels of the organization is very important and successes at the campus level can have a university-wide impact. Mintzberg (1978) speaks to the interplay between the dynamic environment and bureaucratic momentum with leadership mediating between the two. In a later publication, Mintzberg (1994, p 113) observes that, “some of the most important strategies in organizations emerge without the intention or sometimes even the awareness of top managers.” Burgelman & Grove (2007) also highlight how innovation can occur in part because a decentralized or autonomous initiative was allowed to occur at the mid-level of the management structure.

In the next section, recommendations for the way forward for the SFU-City of Burnaby and SFU-City of Surrey collaborations as well as general advice for universities is provided.

7.4 Recommendations for Practice

7.4.1 SFU - City of Burnaby Collaboration: Recommendations

The relationship between the City of Burnaby and SFU has been shaped by an almost 50-year history. The critical land issue has an influence on the relationship today despite the issue's resolution in the mid-nineties. Trust and confidence in the relationship have not been created, so attempts to rebuild the relationship must be not be short-term efforts.

Influenced by this history and challenged by the isolated location and a lack of previous effort, the dynamics of the relationship do not encourage either organization to have high expectations for the collaboration or to explore a more active role for the university in economic and social development. The relationship is trapped in a vicious circle. The lack of strategic purpose does not create the direction and energy to forge a closer relationship or even to desire one. The absence of a close relationship does not create the opportunity to understand the context and identify the roles and strategic areas to which a closer collaboration would be of most benefit.

Despite this lack of collaboration, there has been great progress in the evolution of the City of Burnaby and the contributions and impacts of SFU's activities are acknowledged. The main contributions include the development of a highly educated population, local employment, and spin-off companies. While difficult to measure, the growth of the university may have had a positive influence on the branding of the city.

The health and status of the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship might not have been questioned had positive relationships not been forged with other cities, most notably with the City of Surrey. While the view that “we don't have a good relationship with Burnaby” likely existed before the demonstration of the SFU–City of Surrey relationship, the latter has drawn greater attention to the potential benefits of city–university collaborations.

In the way forward with the SFU–City of Burnaby relationship, the following six actions are recommended:

1) Commit to an Effort to Build the Collaboration

There needs to be commitment by both the city and the university to (re)building the collaboration in an incremental fashion, given low expectations and lack of confidence. Effort and people resources from both organizations must be dedicated to this purpose. The lack of regular contact prevents building of trust and inhibits the flow of information (Smith *et al.*, 2004). “There is a need to resolve the situation without assigning culpability. There needs to be a reconciliation, some kind of glue, some basis for a fundamental connection” (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, July 2014). This is a challenge given the city’s perception of a history where its strategic goals, such as a Metrotown campus, have not been responded to by the university. A greater presence of SFU representatives at City of Burnaby events and as members of committees would be a useful starting point to show the university’s commitment and for the university to better understand city priorities.

The inertia that prevents moving forward needs to be addressed, including the belief in a successful outcome: “We are not unhappy, and I don’t have a sense that SFU is unhappy, and we are not feeling unfulfilled. . . .” (City Manager 1, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014).

2) Change the Story of the Collaboration

Currall and Inkpen (2002) state that there is a socially constructed shared history between organizations that constitutes a collective orientation. The collective orientation in this relationship is not a productive one. While the location of SFU in Burnaby has had many positive effects, the legend of a poor or non-existent relationship acts as a barrier to action at different levels of the organization. The characterization of the collaboration as a poor one needs to change, especially in light of the university’s new mission of being Canada’s most community-engaged research university. The occasion of the university’s 50th anniversary provides an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the original donation of land and the contributions of the university and city over the past five decades.

Change the story. The hope is that the view they weren’t fully compensated for the land has been overtaken by the fact that [there] is a successful community on the mountain [and] they benefit from the develop infrastructure and growing tax base. . . . We are not

footloose. We are rooted here. We have to make it work. So even when it isn't working, it's working. (Third-Party CEO 1, *pers. comm.*, 4 September, 2014)

3) Identify the Most Appropriate Role(s) of the University

The City of Burnaby is in an advantageous position because of its location, infrastructure, and financial position. The city boasts 10 of the top 25 telecommunications companies and 29 of the top 100 high-tech companies in BC. Ranked as the best-run city in Canada in *Maclean's Magazine's* first annual survey of municipal governments, Burnaby is also one of the few debt-free municipalities in the province (City of Burnaby, 2012). The City plans to continue to execute economic development through a contract with the Burnaby Board of Trade.¹⁴ City representatives view this approach as very successful by providing access to expertise to support economic development and averting criticism (City Manager 2, *pers. comm.*, 28 October, 2014). The University needs to continue to expand its relationship with the Burnaby Board of Trade. The university could commit resources to working with the Burnaby Board of Trade to update an SFU industry cluster study. This could also lead to the identification of appropriate roles for the university in supporting Burnaby industries.

The City of Burnaby has a continued interest in environmental and social issues. The expertise, objectivity, and long-term perspective of the university is particularly valued by the mayor. The university's role in inspiring youth to pursue post-secondary education through summer camps and other activities and the continued contribution to the education of Burnaby residents is also recognized. The mayor acknowledges that "the more lucrative opportunity for economic development in cities is developing the talent that already exist in your city. . . ." (Mayor, *pers. comm.*, 18 December, 2014) and the benefit of the university's ability to create "centres of creativity and

¹⁴ A city staff member comments on their relative advantaged position: "[A] couple of times people said, 'So what do you do in Burnaby for economic development?' and I said, 'We got a guy with a big stick, and he beats off the businesses we don't want' . . . I mean, it sounds a bit cocky, but it's a bit true. . . . [T]his place attracts business, and you really can be a little bit picky and choosey as to which businesses you facilitate" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 2014).

innovation” by looking at problems from different perspectives, creating entrepreneurs, and drawing people from around the world.

Given these areas of interest, possible areas of focus include the following:

- Given the City of Burnaby’s long history in the social realm (Burnaby, 2014), it may be that this is a more fruitful area of potential collaboration than economic development. Research studies that inform policy and practice as well as active support of local social organizations would likely be welcomed.
- The role of the university as a venue of independent thought is important to the city. A high priority should be placed on finding mechanisms for linking the university’s faculty and research to areas of importance to the city, such as urban development, environmental issues, and social innovation, and for identifying how initiatives such as SFU Public Square could have Burnaby-based activities.
- Simon Fraser University should assess whether a program or campus presence in Metrotown or a newer town centre in Burnaby (such as a community engagement centre or continuing studies operation) would be feasible and desirable. If it would not be feasible, this should be clearly communicated to the City of Burnaby. The university should not proceed with a purely symbolic effort at commitment, as this is not necessarily a major priority for the City of Burnaby.
- Another long-standing area of interest is developing relationships that support Burnaby’s international sister cities of Kushiro (Japan), Hwaseong (Korea), Zhongshan City (China), and Mesa (US).
- The city may not be able to assist in advocating for the university as they are not aligned with the current provincial political party in power but continued development of UniverCity and acceptance of the gondola transportation project are possible high-priority areas.

Understanding the nature of a closer collaboration and seeing possible roles for the university will require vision and imagination from both institutions:

I don’t think there were people, there were visionaries necessarily on the city side who could imagine what a relationship could be. And I think that would be rooted in their historical experience. I think a lot of academics who get into administrative things would not think about those sort of things initially. . . . (Past President 2, *pers. comm.*, 25 April, 2014)

I think [the City of Burnaby’s] has suffered in some of the relationships they have pursued [with] other governments and entities. So their expectation of what is a good relationship may be lower. . . . I don’t think we’ve stretched their imagination as to how much better our relationship could be. . . . I think there is a lack of appreciation of the

opportunities that exist to do things together that could be transformative for the community. (unattributed, *pers. comm*, 2014)

4) Define Appropriate First Small Steps of a Meaningful Collaborative Effort

In addition to beginning to define larger roles for the university, given low expectations and hesitations in engaging, a meaningful first set of achievable joint activities needs to be identified and managed carefully to achieve success. The Burnaby Liaison Committee is one venue for sharing more information, particularly about the city's aspirations, to find a "sweet spot". An inventory of current projects and relationships may be a helpful starting point. This effort needs to include more familiarity and discussions with staff at various levels, including the city manager's office. A meeting held in the past year identified a number of opportunities ranging from outreach involving the SFU football team to the possibility that international students could provide a link to Burnaby's large population of residents of Asian decent.

The SFU-City of Surrey case study has shown the benefits of involving representatives at all levels of the organization, especially faculty and the university's research enterprise. There is a belief that there are some but not extensive interactions between SFU faculty, staff and students and Burnaby organizations. SFU's reorganization of its Innovation Office and the launch of an institutional innovation agenda that includes both entrepreneurship and social innovation may provide the mechanisms and people who can help to make these connections. Similarly an effort to place greater numbers of students, particularly graduate students, in key industry sectors of Burnaby could provide a greater foundation for future strategic initiatives.

5) Revise the Membership and Operation of the SFU-Burnaby Liaison Committee

The SFU-Burnaby Liaison Committee meetings are seen as a useful way for the city to become informed about what SFU is doing and, most importantly, to learn the names and roles of individuals and provide an opportunity to raise issues that can be dealt with in other forums. The frequency of meetings and composition of participants

appear to be appropriate. It is likely that the Liaison Committee will be revised to be a council that would involve all city councillors.¹⁵

The university representatives need to accept the purpose of these meetings as they are felt to be of value to the City representatives and UniverCity. (“The city has interest and authorities that impact the university; the university just has to bear the cost of that kind of relationship management—because it is costly. You think I’ve got another two-and-a-half-hour meeting that doesn’t really do anything except keep these guys feeling that they’re important and informed. It turns out to be very important” (Former University President 3, *pers. comm.*, 7 November, 2014).) Growth of the UniverCity residential population may increase friction in the future and the Liaison Committee may become a more important venue to deal with resident issues.

One suggestion is to consider occasionally adding to the Liaison Committee a representative from a third-party organization such as the Burnaby Board of Trade: “We need to find ways to look beyond a narrowly defined band of municipal-university interests and consider how we can better work together and support each other to serve and enrich the larger community. The current structure doesn’t bring to the table voices that could help us both to perceive how municipal and university resources could be leveraged and harnessed to address those larger needs” (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

If the Liaison Committee does change to involve the entire council, there may be benefits to reconstituting a committee of staff from each organization. This would provide a vehicle for ongoing communications and allow another opportunity to build individual relationships. The Liaison Committee should be further supplemented with SFU membership on other city committees or task forces created as opportunities arise. Simon Fraser University committees or projects that could include city representation (e.g., in public policy, urban studies, or resource and environmental management) should also be explored.

¹⁵ It is a reflection of the state of the relationship that the mayor did not feel the need to consult with the university before proposing this change.

6) Assign One or More Appropriate Liaison People from the University

University representatives acknowledge that there wasn't a Burnaby champion ("T]here needs to be someone else who chooses Burnaby . . . "(Third-Party CEO 1, pers. comm., 4 September 2014)) or liaison person as is the case for both the Vancouver and Surrey campuses. The liaison person needs to have the ability to recognize opportunities for SFU expertise and involvement and the credibility to reach back into SFU to engage faculty and staff. The position of the staff person must ensure some "administrative heft" that enables him or her to have influence and resources (President, *pers. comm.*, 26 November, 2014).

Burnaby's culture, and certainly the mayor, appears to place a high value on whether the representatives are relatable. Care should be taken to assign individuals who fit this profile. The liaison person(s) would be in a position to educate the university as well, and the university needs to accept responsibility for the past absence of sustained effort in this regard.

In conclusion, given the history of the relationship, great care has to be taken in advancing the collaboration. These six actions should be undertaken if at the senior level, both institutions agree that a closer collaboration is desirable. Attention and resources will be required to implement the communication and management processes to identify and support initiatives. While hopefully early successes will be realized, the process will not be a short-term one. The caution of one interviewee is noted: "Mutual trust and respect [are] very delicate. It can go down very quickly, but it always takes a much longer time to build it back than it did to go down" (unattributed, *pers. comm.*, 16 July, 2014).

7.4.2 SFU – City of Surrey Collaboration: Recommendations

The SFU–City of Surrey collaboration is currently viewed as a very successful one by both the university and the city. Supported by a number of linkages at all levels of the organization, there are high expectations by the city of continued involvement of SFU in reaching its goals given past success and practice.

The future of Surrey is important to the economic prospects of the province given its large, young population, location, and the availability of industrial land. With affordable housing drawing a large number of residents every month, the city continues to struggle to keep pace with infrastructure needs. Economic development to generate more revenue from a business tax base will likely become an even greater priority. Surrey's Innovation Boulevard, co-led with SFU, is supporting an industry cluster in health. A future clean energy business cluster is under discussion with the acknowledged challenges of a lack of infrastructure and critical mass of industry. Agrifood is a third sector of opportunity, given the large amount of agricultural land and a burgeoning food manufacturing sector. As a result of prior successes, expectations for SFU's involvement in these initiatives are high.

There are opportunities to further expand the roles the university plays in social and cultural development. Crime prevention, including a focus of the underlying root causes of crime such as mental health and addictions, provide new opportunities to link SFU's research and knowledge transfer activities. A new area of collaboration, social innovation, is being pursued, with the SFU Surrey executive director and a city councillor as joint chairs of a new committee that involves a number of SFU researchers.

Given the positive collaboration and that current effective university–city interface structure and management processes, the recommendations are primarily small improvements as follows:

- SFU could better utilise existing city committees and, possibly, presentations at city council meetings to communicate university plans and joint successes to the public. An annual State of the City address by the student union or an annual report to communicate to the public the results of the university–city collaboration would meet this need.
- A possible new process would be for SFU to meet with new city councillors to discuss city priorities and plans, university activities, and areas in which SFU is available to provide assistance. New members of SFU's Board of Governors, incoming deans, and other academic administrators should also be made aware of the collaboration and the opportunities it creates.
- Opportunities exist to more fully involve other post-secondary institutions. Kwantlen Polytechnic University has committed to a small professional development campus

in City Centre adjacent to City Hall. There is an opportunity for SFU to embrace this development and create an “urban knowledge arena” (Perry & May, 2010, p. 21).

- Surrey can take a leadership role in the region as BC’s second largest city and the largest city in the South Fraser region. A less administrative definition of *city* and a shift to a regional approach may provide fresh perspectives (Atkins *et al.*, 1999).
- SFU and the City of Surrey need to continue using a “clear, united voice” to advocate with the province for the agreed upon doubling of the campus.¹⁶ If this expansion proceeds, the capacity of the university to respond to the needs of the region will be greatly enhanced by new programs in engineering, health, and creative technologies and increased student and faculty capacity.

In conclusion, the collaboration between SFU and the City of Surrey is a very positive and productive one. However it is a recent collaboration and has not been tested by a major incident. Minor incidents are addressed through the multiple communication channels and relationships that have been built over the years. A current negotiation over a land exchange might be a first major challenge. SFU will hopefully learn from the history of the land dispute in Burnaby and the negative result of tensions over governance.

¹⁶ There may be possible fatigue by the City of Surrey in continuing to advocate for this expansion with the province. Despite an agreement with the province in 2006 to double the campus in size from 2,500 to 5,000 Full-Time Equivalent students, growth has been stalled for eight years. If this expansion doesn’t proceed, teaching and research activity at the campus may be reduced. A new budget model that rewards Faculties based on teaching activity disadvantages the Surrey campus with its smaller lecture theatres. The struggles of several academic units that are below critical mass in students and faculty is another challenge that will worsen with continued budget reductions. One small academic unit is already being relocated to the Burnaby campus.

7.4.3 General Recommendations for Cities and Universities

From the understanding gained from this thesis, below are practical recommendations for universities and cities that wish to build successful collaborations for regional economic development:

- **Take into account the history of the relationship**

Document and understand the history of the relationship and the fact that there are different interpretations of that history.¹⁷ Even in cases of where a peaceful, minimalist relationship is the goal, negative incidents should be identified and addressed to the best ability of both parties so that each organization is open to strategic opportunities and responsive to the other institution.

- **At minimum, accept and maintain a positive and respectful relationship**

If the relationship's history has not allowed for trust to be developed or repaired and a strategic project or strategy is not identified, it is desirable to have a respectful "peaceful co-existence". However, even in this scenario there may be opportunities to work more closely with related, third-party organizations and make an effort to be responsive, participate in a range of existing communication mechanisms, and acknowledge and celebrate successes.

- **Establish a culture of openness and responsiveness and demonstrate relevance**

Establishing responsiveness of an organization to the needs of the other collaborator is a major factor in building a successful relationship. If there is a commitment to the collaboration, senior administration of both organizations should achieve an environment in which staff at all organizational levels feel encouraged to be open and to approaching their counterpart to identify opportunities. Has the university established its relevance? Does the city understand how to engage with the university and vice-versa? Both organizations must be prepared to work at the collaboration and build the necessary relationships and processes.

¹⁷ The SFU participants' lack of awareness of the original donation and land dispute highlights the need for processes for improved institutional memory.

- **Identify a shared purpose or vision**

What is the “why” of the relationship? Does the city understand the opportunities and areas to which the university can contribute? Building understanding can take time and many small demonstrations, especially when attempting to harness the research power and benefits of a university. Value the joint learning that takes place during such a process.

- **Identify the most appropriate and valued roles for the university and the city**

Understand the context of the university and city and how this might make some university’s roles in economic, social, and cultural development more valued than others. To find an appropriate role, fully understand the current context of the city and the areas that could be of mutual benefit. Context influences the value placed on place-making and city branding, active roles in economic development, and joint advocacy to other levels of government. The location of the university is important but not the sole determinant of the nature and success of the collaboration. An isolated location may require additional effort, resources, and strategies to integrate the university in community facilities and initiatives.

- **Build trust over time**

Set appropriate expectations, celebrate and attribute successes, take risks, and assist without the need to realize a short-term benefit (for example, in some areas of advocacy that assist the other organization). Repairing a relationship in which there have been conflicts and disputes is different from starting a relationship. If both parties are committed to resetting the relationship, start with small projects to gain confidence and build trust. It is likely that disputes will arise with greater contact. Some existing liaison structures and relationships may provide relief but a dispute resolution process discussed in advance such as a process for the appointment a joint or external mediator.

- **Communicate regularly using a number of approaches**

Make sure there are one or more designated liaison people or relationship managers with the appropriate skills and mandate. Make use of third-party organizations and venues in which the university and city are only two of the participants. Consider cross-committee appointments, liaison committees with a mandate appropriate to the goals of the relationship, and other mechanisms—but only when they make sense. Periodically reflect on the health of the collaboration

and review formal liaison committees and management structures. An unnecessary committee or a meeting seen as useless will not further the collaboration.

- **Encourage and develop multilayer points of sustained contact**

Pursue roles and activities that deepen the reach and impact of a university's teaching, research, and community engagement missions. Student involvement is generally a safe starting point, but connection to the research enterprise has great impact. A commitment to community engagement as an institutional mission or campus mandate is useful in creating a positive environment to encourage this contact and is of more benefit if there is also the commitment of people and resources to support the efforts of faculty, staff, and students.

I look forward to presenting the results of my thesis to colleagues to gain their perspectives and continue to understand and improve university–city collaborations.

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APPENDIX A: ARCHIVAL SEARCH DETAILS

From a search of the subject of City of Burnaby/Municipality of Burnaby/Burnaby Relations, the following SFU fonds were identified and reviewed for possible correspondence and materials.

Office of the President fonds (1963–1996)

Burnaby:

F-193-30-3-2-1 Municipality of Burnaby 1963–1968

F-193-30-3-2-2 Municipality of Burnaby 1968–1973

F-193-30-3-2-2 Burnaby Municipality 1989–1990

F-193-30-3-2-10 Burnaby/SFU Centennial Project 1989–1991

F-193-30-3-2-11 Burnaby 1991–1992

F-193-30-3-2-12 Burnaby 1993–1994

F-193-30-3-2-13 Burnaby controversies—clippings

F-193-30-3-2-14 Burnaby 1995–1996

University land use:

F-193-6-8-3-1 Burnaby/SFU discussions, volume 1, 1994–1995

F-193-6-8-3-2 Burnaby/SFU discussions, volume 2, 1994–1995

F-193-6-8-3-2 Burnaby/SFU discussions, volume 3, 1994–1995

Office of the Vice-President, Finance and Administration fonds

External Relations: F-28-5-0-0-9 Municipalities 1973–1979

Office of the Vice-President, External Relations (1973–1979)

Archives and Records Management fonds

F-51-3-0-0-1 Burnaby correspondence and reference materials 1970–1991

Office of the Vice-President, Research

F-86-58-11-1 and F 86-5-1-11-2 Burnaby Lands Committee Vol. and Vol. 2 1995–1997

University Land Use (1963–1968)

In addition, a search was conducted of *Burnaby Matters*, an archive of local newspapers, for the search term “Simon Fraser University”. Eighteen articles to obtain and review were identified.

The City of Burnaby archives were not searched, but copies were obtained of several council reports and staff reports related to the selection of the Burnaby Mountain site.

APPENDIX B: DRAFT INTERVIEW GUIDE

(Adapted for each organization. The guide below was for city representatives)

Background and Level of Involvement with University:

What is your role with your organization? How long have you been in your current position?

What has been the nature of your involvement with SFU?

Who from SFU have you most frequently interacted with and in what way?

University/City Roles and Centrality

What do you believe is the most important role(s) of a university in furthering the city's goals?

Does the university have a role in social and economic development and in what way?

Has your perception of this role of the university changed over the past decade? If so, why?

What limits activities and/or success in joint initiatives for regional economic, social, or cultural development?

What are your expectations of the benefits and goals in your relationship with SFU? Have your expectations changed over time? Why or why not?

Perception of Relationship and its Evolution

How has the relationship with SFU evolved over time? What have been the most important events or milestones in this collaboration that you feel affect the relationship today? Do you feel that past events influence what you expect from the relationship?

How would you describe the important values of the city in the way it operates ("the way we do things around here and what we believe")? Of SFU?

What have been the challenges and barriers in developing the relationship and projects with SFU/city?

Is the relationship with SFU different from your relationship with other post-secondary institutions in your city? With other external organizations?

Interface and Liaison Structures

What are the most important management and communication structures or processes, either in your organization or joint city–SFU structures or processes, that support the relationship? How have these evolved? What is your assessment of their effectiveness?

Are specific people or positions assigned to city–SFU projects or the collaboration?

Do third-party organizations play a role?

What structures or management processes could be put in place to better support the collaboration? What is missing?

Management Processes

Goal-setting: How are joint goals, priorities, and initiatives identified?

How would you define or measure the success of the relationship?

Do you feel the other organization is upfront with you about what it can and cannot give in time, energy, or other resources to achieve joint goals?

Risk-taking: Has the relationship encouraged you to take risks?

Communication: Do you feel the relationship supports information sharing and contributes to organizational learning?

How do you work through differences?

Do you feel a sense of inclusion, respect, and mutual trust? How could this improve?

Interfirm adaptation: What do you perceive to be your impact or influence on SFU?

Equity preservation: Do you feel the benefits of the relationship are equitable?

Incidents/Examples: Describe an incident or example that most clearly for you demonstrates the positive aspects of the relationship of the city and SFU or where your operations or programmes have been strengthened through the collaboration. Every relationship has its challenges. What incident or example provides an example of the negative aspects?

The Future: What are the opportunities and challenges that might be addressed through joint action and collaboration over the next decade? Are the established structures and management and communication processes adequate for sustaining current initiatives and responding to these opportunities and challenges?

Is there any other issue you wish to raise relevant to the matters discussed?

At any point in interview: Is there someone else that would have a different perspective or opinion?

APPENDIX C: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IN LAND DISPUTE

**Briefing prepared for Deputy Minister by Gregg Macdonald, Executive Director,
External Relations, SFU**

1957: The Corporation of the District of Burnaby enacted a bylaw (No. 3924) that dedicated municipality-owned lands on Burnaby Mountain for park and public recreation purposes.
1963: The decision was taken to locate Simon Fraser University on Burnaby Mountain and the Corporation of Burnaby transferred title for the sum of \$1.00.
1964: As campus construction proceeded, Dr Gordon Shrum and the municipality discussed a shared “master plan” for the mountaintop. These discussions were inconclusive, although Burnaby claims that a letter from Dr Shrum agreed to the notion of park dedication. This letter cannot be located.
1970: The municipal manager wrote to President Kenneth Strand asking for the settlement of outstanding boundary issues and the “return of redundant property to the municipality for park development”.
1973: Debate occurred between the Corp. of Burnaby, the university, and their respective solicitors over Burnaby’s contention that SFU held imperfect title to a portion of the lands. The exchange broke off with SFU taking the legal position that it holds indefeasible title to the lands and that these lands are unaffected by any Burnaby dedication bylaws. Burnaby subsequently came to accept SFU’s title claim but continued to assert its zoning authority.
1975: Burnaby rezoned 800 acres outside the ring road as the “Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area”. The university has never recognized the legality of the zoning. (D’Andrea, 1991; An SFU director of facilities management referred to the zoning of the city as “form of expropriation without compensation” (Cunningham, 1994).)
1988: The Burnaby Mountain Preservation Society was established as a political and environmental lobby.
1990: Burnaby Council, in cooperation with the Greater Vancouver Regional District, volunteered the 800 disputed acres on Burnaby Mountain for “green zone” protection.
1992: Continuing acrimony between the city and SFU led to the revitalization of the Burnaby–SFU Liaison Committee, which had been established the previous year to resolve the ongoing dispute.
1991: Dr Barry Jones, MLA (Burnaby North), with support from Minister Tom Perry, volunteered to assist with negotiations between the parties.
1993: Just when SFU was hopeful that the Burnaby Liaison Committee was finally making progress, discussions ended with Burnaby’s apparent inability to agree to ongoing meeting dates.

1994: In April, Burnaby and the Greater Vancouver Regional District nominated SFU land for provincial “Protected Area Strategy” status.

1994: The Liaison Committee was re-established, with revised membership on the university’s side. Meeting first on May 10, 1994, the committee agreed that both parties would exchange written positions on land use as a means of breaking the impasse. The university subsequently delivered its proposal at a meeting on June 7, 1994, although the city failed to reciprocate. At Burnaby’s request, the meeting previously scheduled for June was delayed until mid-July, thereby giving the city an opportunity to provide an official response.

1994: In June, Discovery Parks Incorporated’s rezoning application to construct a BCBC Ambulance Dispatch Facility in the SFU Discovery Park was denied.

1994: In July, local press quoted Environment Minister Moe Sihota expressing his willingness to legislate SFU land as a park.